



JOHN-WESLEY

UNITY SCHOOL

BX

8495

W516l Lee

The Lord's horseman

WITHDRAWN
by Unity Library

UNITY SCHOOLS
LIBRARY

Rev. J. M. Trotter
McAlester - Okla

Conference
at Ardmore
1934 -

THE
LORD'S HORSEMAN

*You may have pictured in the England
of the eighteenth century a moorland on a
windy winter evening, and on the near
horizon the glare of an ill-lit manufactur-
ing town, and a single figure, small and
slight, his long gray hair falling over his
shoulders, sitting on a tired horse plodding
forward with loosened rein. It is a subject
the genius of a Millet might have made as
memorable as his famous "Angelus."*

F. J. FOAKES JACKSON,
"Social Life in England"

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

BY
UMPHREY LEE

UNITY SCHOOL
LIBRARY



WITHDRAWN
by Unity Library

THE CENTURY CO.
NEW YORK LONDON

UNITY SCHOOL LIBRARY
Unity Village
Lee's Summit, Missouri 64063

92
W51c

Copyright, 1928, by
THE CENTURY CO.

288

First printing August, 1928

PRINTED IN U. S. A.

2618

BX

8495

W 5161

TO

MARY MARGARET LEE

PREFACE

John Wesley never meant to found the Methodist Church, but to-day few remember that he ever did anything else. Overshadowed by the institution which he built against his will, the adventurous, catholic-minded man whose journals have delighted the knowing for four centuries has been known—save only to a few—as a church founder, as a “venerable father.” Yet in the century that saw the rise of modern industry, the beginnings of the Romantic Movement in literature, the foreshadowings of nineteenth-century scientific discoveries, and the American and French struggles for liberty, John Wesley created a religious organization unparalleled in history, led a great romantic movement in religion, wrote books on electricity, medicine, and natural history, and fought the battles of personal liberty against the theologians.

The purpose of this volume is to portray Wesley in the perspective of his own time. Competent biographers of Wesley have not been lacking, but most of them have been interested primarily in the church which he founded or in the ecclesiastical conflicts which have been waged about his person and work. Without forgetting that Wesley was a religious gen-

P R E F A C E

ius, I have tried to remember that he was a man. For this reason I have included the documents which appear in the appendices.

I have chosen not to burden the pages with references to authorities. Those who wish to know more of Wesley may refer to the many "Lives" which have been written since John Hampson published his "Memoirs of the late Rev. John Wesley" in 1791. The three volumes by the Rev. Luke Tyerman (1872-5, 2nd ed.) constitute an invaluable collection of sources. Smaller but more readable biographies are those by Rigg, Fitchett, Winchester, and Telford. The Dean of Winchester has recently written an attractive but meager volume in the "Great Churchmen" series. The most exhaustive work on Wesley and Methodism is being written by the Rev. John S. Simon, who has already published four volumes (London, 1921-27). Southey's admirable "Life" (1820) remains the only biography of Wesley written by a distinguished man of letters. For the serious student the publications and "Proceedings" of the Wesley Historical Society are indispensable.

The best edition of Wesley's "Works" is that edited by Thomas Jackson and first published in London in 1831. The Journal has been carefully edited by the late Rev. Nehemiah Curnock (London, 1909-16). In addition to much hitherto unpublished material added to the journals, this edition contains

P R E F A C E

large excerpts from Wesley's diaries, which were written in a confusing mixture of shorthand, cipher and abbreviations. In 1915, the late Mr. George Eayrs published a charming volume of selections from Wesley's letters, "Letters of John Wesley: A Selection of Important and New Letters with Introductions and Biographical Notes." Unless otherwise stated, the Jackson edition of the "Works" and the "Standard Edition" of the Journal, edited by Curnock, are quoted in this book.

I am under obligation to many more people and institutions than I could name without seeming to parade my authorities. Thanks are due the British Museum for permission to make a photostatic copy of "An Amour of the Rev. John Wesley." For an appreciation of some aspects of Wesley's life and character, I am indebted to Professor F. J. Foakes Jackson, who has himself written all too little concerning the Founder of Methodism. A number of friends have assisted me in various ways, among whom I must mention Mr. P. L. Turner of Dallas; Mr. Alec F. Hall of Clifton, Bristol, England; Professor R. H. Griffith of the University of Texas; and my associate, Mr. Walter Towner. Especially must I thank Professor J. H. McGinnis, who has patiently read both the manuscript and the proof and has given me the benefit of his knowledge and experience both as a student of eighteenth-century literature and as an editor.

P R E F A C E

For the views expressed in this volume I am, of course, alone responsible.

UMPHREY LEE

May, 1928.

CONTENTS

| CHAPTER | PAGE |
|--|------|
| I OUT OF THE FENS | 3 |
| II A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN | 20 |
| III WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA | 42 |
| IV PILGRIM'S PROGRESS | 68 |
| V THE LORD'S CAVALRY | 86 |
| VI CONTRA MUNDUM | 107 |
| VII "POPE JOHN" | 126 |
| VIII INTERLUDE | 145 |
| IX ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS | 162 |
| X AN ITINERANT MIND | 179 |
| XI FIFTY YEARS OF ENGLAND | 205 |
| XII THE SPIRIT OF '76 | 226 |
| XIII ANACREON | 244 |

APPENDICES

| | |
|---|-----|
| "AN ACCOUNT OF AN AMOUR OF JOHN WESLEY" | 267 |
| A LETTER TO MOLLY | 352 |

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

CHAPTER I

OUT OF THE FENS

THE traveler who jogs leisurely along the well-kept road between Haxey and Epworth in northern Lincolnshire, will be pleased, if he is a thrifty soul, with the carefully tilled and fertile fields which lie between typical North Country English villages; but he will hardly suspect that, a little more than a century ago, this was part of "fen lands" where only an occasional hillock appeared above a sea of waters. The strip of land lying between the Trent, the Don, and the Idle rivers was, until the nineteenth century, well deserving of its ancient name, "the Isle of Axholme." During most of the year the Isle was inaccessible from the outside world except by boat, and the inhabitants made their scanty living by fishing and by cultivating such fields as lay above the yearly overflow. The land is everywhere low, at no place rising to more than two hundred feet above sea-level, but there is now little indica-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

tion of the swamps which once made the Isle a lonely and desolate waste.

The change in the character of the country is due to a system of drainage which was completed in the beginning of the last century. The work was enterprise almost two centuries before, but the people of the Isle, enraged at a proposal to drain their swamps, stubbornly fought every effort which was made by lord or king toward carrying out the elaborate schemes which Dutch engineers made first under the patronage of Charles I, later under Cromwell, and then under Charles II. The reader in the British Museum may still thumb a yellowed pamphlet in which John Lillburne, foremost radical of the early Commonwealth, pleaded the cause of the Isle, and to this day the sere and brittle pages with their turbulent Cromwellian paragraphs are eloquent of the feelings of the fen dwellers. During most of the seventeenth century, the Isle was at war with the authorities. Isolated from the outside world and busy in repelling what they thought an invasion of their rights, the "Islonians," as they were called, were surly and inhospitable. As late as 1839, men could remember when the dwellers on the Isle had been "rude, uncivil, and envious to all others." Especially did they have an antipathy for Tory politicians and churchmen. Owing to the constitution of English local government, their curates and rectors had all too much to do with enforcing the authority which the people abhorred, and to the

OUT OF THE FENS

fen people the clergy were as the tax-gatherers. The attitude of the Islonians toward the latter may be illustrated by the experience of Nathaniel Reading, Esq., appointed at the end of the seventeenth century to enforce the collection of taxes, who was compelled to fight no less than thirty-one pitched battles and then had his house burned for his pains.

The principal town of the Isle is Epworth. It is well situated, as such things go in the fen lands; an observer remarked, some four hundred years ago, that "Hepworth is the best uplandish town for building in one streate in the Isle." Only a century ago, Epworth was a straggling town, which could be described as "pleasantly situated on the side of a hill." "Three streets lead into a small but neat and clean looking Market-Place," continues the description, "and that which comes from the west is in length considerably more than a mile, having here and there a good house standing apart, with a garden and small enclosure between." The town had a weekly market, and a fair twice yearly. Until the end of the eighteenth century these markets and fairs were well patronized and Epworth was a prosperous village; but with the coming of steam navigation on the Trent, and with the later advent of the railroad into the Isle by way of Haxey, Epworth became a sleepy village, almost forgetful that it once belonged to the great house of Mowbray, and recalling its other glories only when visitors

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

come to see the rectory and the old church on the hill.

The church of St. Andrew is the pride of the village. Into its walls are written the architectural history of the Isle, for the nave, the chancel, the north porch, the tower, are all of different periods. The tower is excellent, but of much later date than the nave, and the tired-looking aisle pillars, a little awry after their vigil of centuries, seem to be proudly unaware of the garish modernity of the Victorian window over the altar. In the churchyard, gnarled old trees bend over crumbling tombstones, and flagstones lead away between other more stately trees toward the village. On the other side of the market is the rectory. The building, which stands now in a very respectable garden and behind most respectable walls, has been enlarged in recent years; but the main part of the old rectory was built in 1709. Before that time, there was a smaller house "built all of timber and plaster, and covered with a straw thatch."

To this older rectory, one year after Nathaniel Reading's house had been burned by the inhabitants of Axholme, came a new rector and his wife. A little, keen-eyed, high-tempered man, the new rector of Epworth was of good family, the Wesleys or Wellesleys, of whom several had already made their mark in the kingdom. Indeed, beginning with the grandfather of the Rector, one Bartholomew Wesley, who was ejected from his living in 1662

OUT OF THE FENS

for nonconformity, and ending with the organist and composer, Samuel Sebastian Wesley, who died in 1876, there is an unbroken line of famous sons of the family. Seven of them, in two centuries, are in the "Dictionary of National Biography." Of these, the Rev. Samuel Wesley, M.A., is one.

Samuel Wesley was born a gentleman and made himself a scholar. He had been brought up a dissenter and had been educated in a dissenting academy at Stoke Newington, where, along with Daniel Defoe, he received instruction from one Charles Morton, who was later to be vice-president of Harvard College in New England. Having decided to change his religion, Wesley entered Exeter college as a "poor scholar." He later served as chaplain on a man-of-war and as a London curate, and, at last, was given the living of Epworth, some say at the request of the dying Queen Mary. Samuel Wesley's chief claim to distinction among his contemporaries was, first, his scholarship, and second, his poetry. He had been one of the editors of "The Athenian Mercury," that forerunner of "Notes and Queries," which was edited by a friend and brother-in-law of Wesley, John Dunton, known mainly for his autobiography, "The Life and Errors." As a poet, Wesley had the honor of being criticized in most of the satires of his day. Garth in his "Dispensary," Swift in the "Battle of the Books," and later, Pope in the "Dunciad" paid their several respects to the little rector of Epworth. A poetical

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

history of the Old and New Testaments was the rector's chief claim to literary distinction, and his *magnum opus* as a scholar was his "Dissertations on the Book of Job." A copy of the latter was presented to Queen Caroline after the author's death. The queen smiled and said the binding was pretty.

Pope, in spite of his criticism of Samuel Wesley, a criticism which he carefully expunged from later editions of the "Dunciad," felt kindly toward the rector. He spoke of him in carefully chosen words as a scholar and "an old Tory." Whether or not Wesley was a poet, he was certainly a Tory. He agreed with the great body of the Anglican clergy in contending for the highest theory of church privilege and in opposing Whig bishops. Wesley was for several terms one of the two representatives of the diocese of Lincoln to the lower house of Convocation, the legislative body of the Church of England, and there supported the lower house in its fight for independence from the dominantly Whig house of bishops.

The Rector's wife was also of good family. The daughter of a distinguished dissenting clergyman, Dr. Samuel Annesley, one-time vicar of Milton's church, St. Giles, Cripplegate, Susannah Wesley was, like her husband, a convert to the Church of England. Of gentle blood—her father was nephew to the first Earl of Anglesey—and of unusually strong mind, Susannah Annesley had studied far beyond the mark set for women of her day, and she

OUT OF THE FENS

held her convictions, both theological and political, with a confidence born both of her character and her intellect.

These two came at last to live in the old rectory at Epworth, which looked out over the bleak landscape, all water in summer and all ice in winter. For eight years they attended to house and glebe and parish, and begat more sons and daughters. On June 17 (Old Style), 1703, John Wesley was born, second son and fifteenth child. His elder brother, Samuel, was thirteen, and almost ready to be sent to the great Westminster School, in London; Emilia, Susannah, Mary, and Hetty were the surviving sisters of the household. Three others of the rector's numerous brood were as yet unborn—Charles, Martha, and Kezziah.

When John was six years old the rectory was burned and he was barely saved by the effort of some neighbors. The Rector, having given up his second son for lost, received him back as "a brand plucked out of the burning." He took the rescue as a sign that God intended great things for the boy. Whatever God intended, the purpose of the Epworthians was plain; for they had fired the house as part of their campaign against the Rector, who had been unpopular since his induction into the living.

In the first place, he was a clergyman and a Tory. In the second place, he was a friend of Nathaniel Reading, Esq., attorney and collector of taxes. In the third place, he was a strict disciplinarian, visit-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

ing his parish, inquiring into the private lives of his parishioners, and relentlessly enforcing ancient canons. So the resentful Islonians waged war upon him, stabbed his cattle, maimed his sheep, and fired his house.

The house was rebuilt in 1709, and still stands as a testimonial to the sturdy good taste of the Rector. But for many years there was little furniture in it. During this time, when poverty kept the new rectory unfurnished, the family lived part of the year at the village of Wroote, which had been added to the living. "For six months of the year, sometimes for longer, the thatched parsonage at Wroote rose out of a world of waters, forlorn as a cornstack, and the Rector of Epworth journeyed between his two parishes by boat, often in soaked breeches, and sometimes with a napkin tied over his hat and wig."

The Rector's poverty was partly a result of his genius for running into debt. While John was very small, some of Samuel Wesley's political enemies revenged themselves on him by having him imprisoned for three months in Lincoln Castle for his debts. Once the Archbishop of York questioned Mrs. Wesley as to whether she had ever actually wanted bread. "My Lord," answered Susannah, ". . . strictly speaking, I never did want bread. But then I had so much care to get it before it was ate, and to pay for it after, as has often made it very unpleasant to me; and I think to have bread under

OUT OF THE FENS

such terms is the next degree of wretchedness to having none at all."

To pay his debts, Wesley had to resort to his patrons for aid. The Archbishop of York and the Duke of Buckingham came more than once to his rescue, and the little Rector was duly grateful. Literary men were accustomed to accept help of this kind, and Samuel was nothing if not literary. But beyond the limits of respectable patronage he would not go. When the Archbishop proposed to make application to the House of Lords for a "brief"—that is, authority to take public collections—to relieve the clergyman and his numerous progeny, Wesley declined the offer, observing dryly that such an action would doubtless be "the first instance of a brief for losses by child-bearing which ever came before that honorable house."

Unable to associate with the villagers, whom they regarded as clods and worse, cut off from the great world by miles of sullen, turgid waters, living in poverty galling to their gentility, the Wesley household was a world unto itself. And the Wesley children bore to their graves marks of their isolation, of their confinement to the weary, monotonous fen lands, of their resentment of poverty and suffering. They were all eccentric; at least four of the girls made unhappy marriages; one of them brought shame on the country rectory.

But their lot was not altogether melancholy. In

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

their mother they had a domestic engineer of marvelous ability. While her fiery little husband disciplined the parish, wrote pamphlets against dissenters, or attended Convocation, Susannah taught her children to cry softly and to fear the rod. They were cared for in military fashion, each having his time and his duty. She taught them herself, teaching them the Lord's Prayer as soon as they could speak. After they were five, they were taught to read, one day being given to teaching the alphabet. Six hours of each day were spent in school, and, at the evening, the elder each took one of the younger and read to him the psalm and chapter for the day. Instruction was carried into higher branches, Mrs. Wesley even writing a system of theology for one of her daughters. The tract remains, witness alike to Susannah's understanding of current theological problems and to the dryness of that part of her teaching.

Under such rule John's mind flourished as in its native air, for he early disclosed an irrepressible and often exasperating logic. "Child," said his father one time, "you think to carry everything by dint of argument; but you will find how little is ever done in the world by close reasoning." At another time, Samuel was provoked to anger by his offspring's methodical mind. "I profess, sweetheart," he said to his wife, "I think our Jack would not attend to the most pressing necessities of nature, unless he could give a reason for it."

OUT OF THE FENS

Despite the monotony of life in Epworth, there was much to stir the imagination and to fire the ambition of the Wesley children. When John was four years old, his elder brother, Samuel, entered as King's Scholar the Westminster School in London, at that time one of the most famous in Europe because of its late headmaster, Dr. Busby. When John was eight, Samuel entered Christ Church, Oxford. Three years later he was called back to Westminster as usher. During his early boyhood, therefore, John was hearing from Samuel of life at Oxford and London and of happenings in the world of politics and literature in which his father moved when he could get away from his obscure parish.

Of politics the Rector's children would certainly hear enough. Before John's birth, a political disagreement had been sufficient to cause a temporary separation between the fiery little poet and his determined spouse. "Sukey," said Samuel to his wife during the last days of William III, "why did you not say 'Amen' this morning to the prayer for the king?" "Because," she said, "I do not believe the Prince of Orange to be king." "If that be the case," was the little man's reply, "You and I must part; for if we have *two* kings, we must have *two beds*." Accordingly, he went to his study, spent a little time there, and rode off to London, where he was Convocation man. "On March eighth in the following year, 1702," so John Wesley later told the story, "King William died; and as both my father and

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

mother were agreed as to the legitimacy of Queen Anne's title, the cause of their misunderstanding ceased. My father returned to Epworth, and conjugal harmony was restored."

Before John was old enough to walk, his father was in no little trouble through the unauthorized printing of some letters that he had written on dissenting academies. When John was six years old, that is, in the year of the fire, Dr. Henry Sacheverell, a Tory firebrand, preached an inflammatory sermon in St. Paul's condemning toleration and advocating the highest doctrines of passive obedience. The sermon was declared seditious by the House of Commons, and Sacheverell was impeached. His defense was thought by some to have been on a literary and scholarly plane which his previous reputation had led no one to anticipate, and in later years, John Wesley asserted that his father had written Sacheverell's defense. If this were so, the Epworth parsonage must have rung with the famous trial in which the Tory champion was convicted and suspended from preaching for three years; for the outcome of the trial was to arouse popular feeling to such an extent that, when Sacheverell made a tour of the country immediately afterward, he was received with acclaim far out of proportion to his merits. The whole incident was part of the bitter struggle between High Church and Low, and may well have left its mark upon the Lincolnshire boy whose High-church notions were to be long in dying.

OUT OF THE FENS

In 1714, John was nominated by the Duke of Buckingham, his father's patron, to Charterhouse; and he went up to London in January to enter the famous school at which he was to spend the next six years. While there he was fagged unmercifully, for the older boys stole the meat of the smaller ones and allowed them only bread as their main dish. But young Wesley followed his father's advice, obediently ran thrice around the Charterhouse yard each morning, and thrived. Nor did his spirit suffer. A well-founded tradition has it that an usher once found him haranguing a group of smaller boys, and inquired of the orator why he chose to associate with lower-form boys rather than with older pupils. Young Wesley's reply was oracular: "Better to rule in hell than to serve in heaven."

While John was a student at Charterhouse he heard with no little interest of strange happenings in the rectory at Epworth. During the winter of 1716-17, the rectory was disturbed by a mischievous spirit who knocked on walls, opened doors, banged the furniture, and in general made himself thoroughly unpleasant. Especially did the spirit abhor the Rector's loyal prayers; he was unusually demonstrative when that worthy prayed for the king. The girls named the ghost "Old Jeffrey," and learned that they could torment him by speaking disrespectfully of his activities, as by suggesting that the noises were caused by rats or mice. The Rector attempted in every way to make the ghost speak,

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

even remaining in an otherwise empty room to exhort the spirit to speak his mind, but to no avail.

The story was told at great length in letters to John, who later gathered all the material together into as entertaining a handful of letters as was ever written.¹ His father, his mother, the girls, even a neighboring clergyman, wrote out their differing versions to John's delight. Already he was gathering material on points which aroused his interest. But there is no reason for thinking that this incident is responsible for John Wesley's undoubted credulity in later life. One has only to read certain pages of Boswell to know that the eighteenth century needed no incitement to belief in ghosts. For that matter, Old Jeffrey was so convincing a ghost that he was believed by a successor of Samuel Wesley to have returned a century later to plague the inhabitants of the Epworth rectory. Indeed, the visitor to Epworth to-day is always shown the attic room known as Jeffrey's Chamber, where the spirit worked most freely, and a recent rector of the parish is said to have felt strongly on the subject of the ghost's reality. The noises have been attributed to every one, from malevolent neighbors to the mischievous Hetty; but whoever was responsible, Old Jeffrey's epic remains one of the best ghost-stories in history, and the little boy in Charterhouse must have

¹ Joseph Priestley, the famous chemist, thought this "the best authenticated and best told story of the kind that is anywhere extant." He included the account in "Original Letters by the Rev. John Wesley," which he published in 1791.

OUT OF THE FENS

shivered joyfully as he read the letters which his inquiries elicited, and rejoiced in his father's loyal defiance of the Jacobite apparition.

For reasons more substantial than ghosts, the young student was living in stirring times, for the year 1715 had seen the uprising of the North in the cause of the Pretender. Young Wesley was in the midst of the ferment, for his brother Samuel, then usher at Westminster, was a close friend of Francis Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester and Dean of Westminster, who in 1722 was convicted of treason and banished. John Wesley always defended his elder brother against the charge of Jacobitism, asserting that Samuel was unswervingly loyal to the reigning house. Opponents pointed out not only Samuel's loyal attachment to Atterbury, but also his later diatribes against Sir Robert Walpole and his government, and, finally, a plain statement of Samuel's own daughter after her father's death. Perhaps the real state of Samuel's heart will never be known, but during the years in London when the country was at fever heat at the thought of treason, the little boy in Charterhouse, already curious about everything alive, reveled in his brother's stories of great men and great events.

Many years afterward, John remembered stories which his brother had told him—stories of men found naked on the cold steps of the King's Scholars at Westminster; of a thrilling rescue of a beautiful woman held prisoner by a mad physician; of the

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

amours of Mr. Matthew Prior, poet. A part of this time John seems to have been the guest of his brother, for in 1719 Samuel wrote home that "Jack is with me, and a brave boy, learning Hebrew as fast as he can."

One may picture the second son of the poet of Epworth learning as fast as he could, but eagerly taking in other matters besides Hebrew characters. Methodist biographers are wont to deplore a letting down in the Wesley standard of piety at this time, for John wrote later that during his years at Charterhouse, he "was much more negligent than before, even of outward duties, and almost continually guilty of outward sins, which I knew to be such, though they were not scandalous in the eye of the world. However, I still read the Scriptures, and said my prayers morning and evening." The last sentence will perhaps save his reputation in the eyes of the less exacting; and a glimpse of Wesley as he left Charterhouse for Oxford, in 1720, may serve to assure the reader that the little boy who was "a brand plucked out of the burning," who wished, in Miltonic phrase, rather "to rule in hell than to serve in heaven," was on his predestined way.

Old Samuel Wesley was urgent that John visit Dr. Sacheverell and secure from him letters of recommendation. Accordingly John called on the venerable doctor. "When I was introduced," wrote John in later years, "I found him alone, as tall as a maypole and as fine as an archbishop. I was a very

OUT OF THE FENS

little fellow . . . He said, 'You are too young to go to the University; you cannot know Greek and Latin yet. Go back to school.' I looked at him as David looked at Goliath, and despised him in my heart. I thought, 'If I do not know Greek and Latin better than you, I ought to go back to school indeed.' I left him, and neither entreaties nor commands could have again brought me back to him."

In June, 1720, at the age of seventeen, young Wesley entered Christ Church, Oxford.

CHAPTER II

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

THE Oxford to which Wesley went up from Charterhouse was not the clean, well-paved, decorous town of the twentieth century. Eighteenth-century Oxford had the ill-kept streets and slovenly houses which characterized other English towns of the period. But, as to-day, the sleepy gray city in the plains was distinguished by the tower of Christ's, the ancient walls of Merton, and the grove of Trinity; and the boy who came up to his elder brother's college on a June day in 1720 was so captured by the venerable university that ever afterward he was to look back with longing for an academic peace to which his own venturesome spirit would not allow him to return.

The students of Oxford seem in this century to have matriculated early, at sixteen or seventeen. Colleges filled with these youngsters were not known for their scholarship, although the fault doubtless lay more with the indifference of the instructors than with the age of the students. Christ Church and Lincoln seem to have preserved more of the air of learning than any other college in this period.

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

Christ Church, where young Wesley was matriculated, was conspicuous for its loyalty to the reigning house. Oxford, the headquarters of Charles I in civil war days, was for a long while reputed to be Jacobite in sympathy, but Christ Church early accepted the Hanoverian succession, and the other colleges followed. Whatever their politics, all of them were united in their loyalty to the church. Excessive zeal might be frowned upon and too close observance of the canons suspect, but allegiance to the Establishment as a social necessity and a national symbol was nowhere more insisted upon than at the University. Within this courtesy of outward subscription, there was room for theological wrangles and most lax observance of the ordinances. The University imagined itself loyal to the church at a time when, within her colleges, the church's doctrines were doubted and her order neglected.

Information as to Wesley's life as an undergraduate in a college where churchmanship was more valued than religion is very meager, but such material as is available indicates that he was a normal, somewhat careless youngster, dabbling in verse and taking kindly to outdoor life. Tennis and river sports seem to have bulked large in his scholastic program. In 1726, John sent his elder brother some specimens of his translations from the Latin. The theme of one was a bee which came to an untimely end after tasting the "fair Celinda's" lips. The second example of the young collegian's poetic genius

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

was a metrical rendering of one of the Psalms. His verse was poor, but his taste was catholic.

Verse and the river did not exhaust Wesley's interests. Even more worldly abilities are reflected in the menu of a reunion dinner of old Charterhouse students of which Wesley was a steward in 1727. The menu is creditable as well to the ingenuity of the stewards as to the stomachs of the diners. The dinner included roasted pike, fried whiting, flounders, eels, shrimps, tongues, udders, pigeons, venison pasties, chines and turkeys, lamb and ragouts, wild fowls, sweetbreads and asparagus, almond tarts, roasted lobsters, pear tarts creamed, roast beef, fruit, jellies, custard and florentines. The total cost of this dinner for eighty guests was £92 11s., of which sum the cook was paid £34, the wines cost £30 5s. 6d., and the musicians received £12 12s.

The cost of this dinner makes thoroughly understandable a letter which Susannah Wesley wrote her son in 1724 asking if he had any reasonable hopes of being out of debt. She was most concerned for "the good, generous man" who had lent John ten pounds and had extended the loan until Susannah was ashamed to ask for further grace. She was expecting the return of a wealthy brother from India, a fancy which appears in several letters; but though the ship from India on which the brother was to have arrived came duly to port, the brother was not aboard, nor was he ever heard of again. In a later letter, John's mother writing from Wroote,

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

advised him to save all the money he could conveniently spare, "not to spend on a visit,"—she hastened to add—"but for a wiser and better purpose—to pay debts, and make yourself easy." The rector of Epworth corresponded with his son usually by brief, but pertinent notes.

DEAR SON [wrote the Rector on January 5, 1725],—Your brother will receive £5 for you next Saturday, if Mr. S— is paid the £10 he lent you; if not, I must go to H—, but I promise you I sha'n't forget that you are my son, if you do not that I am, Your loving father.

Samuel could be very business-like about other people's debts, and he could also put a sting into his epistolary efforts, as the following attests:

Wroote, January 26, 1725

DEAR SON,—I am so well pleased with your decent behaviour, or at least, with your letters, that I hope I shall have no occasion to remember any more some things that are past; and since you have now for some time bit upon the bridle, I will take care hereafter to put a little honey upon it, as oft as I am able; but then it shall be of my own mere motion, as the last £5 was, for I will bear no rivals in my kingdom.

Your affectionate father,
SAMUEL WESLEY

But while the Rector was giving his son advice in financial matters, Emilia, the brilliant eldest daughter, was writing John that affairs were so bad with the Rector's personal accounts that an Oxford un-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

dergraduate's extravagances could hardly make them worse. ✓

I know not when we have had so good a year, both at Wroote and at Epworth, as this year; but instead of saving anything to clothe my sister or myself, we are just where we were. A noble crop has almost all gone, beside Epworth living, to pay some part of those infinite debts my father has run into, which are so many that were he to save £50 a year, he would not be clear in the world this seven years. One thing I warn you of: let not my giving you this account be any hindrance to your affairs. If you want assistance in any case, my father is as able to give it now as any time these last ten years; nor shall we be ever the poorer for it.

For the time, John seemed to be less disturbed than any one else at his ability to follow in his father's footsteps. He wrote racy letters to his mother, retailing the gossip of the town. A gentleman of his acquaintance had been standing one night at the door of a coffee-house, when a thief jerked his wig and cap from his head, disappearing in the darkness. "I am pretty safe from such gentlemen," wrote John, "for unless they carried me away, carcass and all, they have but a poor purchase." Once the chief piece of news at the ancient seat of learning was that the famous highwayman, Jack Sheppard, had escaped from Newgate. Occasionally, a ghost-story which he had heard from a friend was included by a dutiful son anxious to please the parental ear. Aside from such items, John gave considerable space to a new medical work he had read.

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

The state of his health at this time gave him an interest in such things, and a famous book of the day, Dr. Cheyne's "Book of Health and Long Life," recommended temperance and exercise, forbade highly seasoned meats, and advised drinking two pints of water and one pint of wine each twenty-four hours.

Wesley's careless and extravagant days were drawing to a close in 1725, for with his undergraduate life almost over he was compelled to think of the future. Heretofore, life in Oxford had been tolerable because seasoned with poetry, easily spent money, and outdoor sports; but only some new prospect could satisfy his voracious appetite for life. Naturally enough for a gentleman without estate, he thought of taking holy orders. His father discouraged him at first, preferring that his son follow "critical learning"; but his mother, with better understanding of his mind, advised "practical divinity." John had some scruples concerning the Athanasian Creed, but, having satisfied the authorities, he was ordained deacon by Bishop Potter on September 19, 1725.

At this time a fellowship in Lincoln College was vacated, and, since the fellowship was reserved for natives of Lincoln, Wesley applied for it. His good reputation at Christ College, together with his father's and elder brother's influence, helped him along, and, in 1726, he was elected Fellow of Lincoln. His father's letter on receiving the news deserves remembrance:

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Dear Mr. Fellow-Elect of Lincoln,—I have done more than I could for you. On your waiting on Dr. Morley [Rector of Lincoln, through whose influence, largely, Wesley was elected] with this, he will pay you £12. You are inexpressibly obliged to that generous man. The last £12 pinched me so hard, that I am forced to beg time of your brother Sam till after harvest, to pay him the £10 that you say he lent you. Nor shall I have as much as that, perhaps not £5, to keep my family till after harvest; and I do not expect that I shall be able to do anything for Charles when he goes to the University. What will be my own fate God only knows. *Sed passi graviora.* Wherever I am, my Jack is fellow of Lincoln. . . .

With the income from his fellowship, Wesley was, for the first time, financially independent. Residence at the University was required, except in extraordinary cases, but the lax method of instruction insured little work. "When any person is chosen Fellow of a College, he immediately becomes a freeholder, and is settled for life in ease and plenty," wrote Nicholas Amherst of St. John's, in 1726. "He wastes the rest of his day," continued the same witness, "in luxury and idleness; he enjoys himself and is dead to the world; for a senior Fellow of a College lives and moulders away in a supine and regular course of eating, drinking, sleeping, and cheating the juniors." Such a prospect was in no way pleasing to as restless a spirit as Wesley. In the first place, he wanted to proceed to his master's degree, which he did in 1727. In the next place, he felt it necessary to help his old father as curate. He se-

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

cured special leave from college, therefore, twice in the next three years, and helped the old poet by preaching at Epworth and Wroote and serving occasionally as amanuensis on his *magnum opus*, which was growing to forbidding proportions in endless dissertations on Job.

For this period of Wesley's life the student has the advantage of diaries which were kept religiously. They were written in abbreviations, in shorthand, and in a cipher of Wesley's own invention. The early diaries give a faithful transcript of his daily—and hourly—activities. During his curacy, according to Dr. Curnock, editor of the standard edition of the *Journal*, Wesley

worked in the old garden at Wroote, made arbours (one of the seats in which probably remains in part to this day), gathered roses and elder flowers for his sisters, cut stakes, shot plovers in the fenland that then lay between the two parishes, wrote sermons for himself and his father, drank tea here and there, swam on summer mornings in the fen river, and went to every village fair within reach . . . read and collected [that is, outlined] Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, indulged in the *Spectator*, in plays and other light literature; discussed points of doctrine or moral philosophy with his learned mother, carefully noting her opinions in his *Diary*; laboriously copied out *Dissertations on Job* for his father; read to his sisters as they sat working in the arbour, stood godfather to sister Nancy's baby, discoursed to Miss Kitty Hargreaves [a neighbor], read Spenser to her, and was not unappreciative of her gentle friendship, as was his father (not his mother) . . . preached severely to the people of Epworth . . . visited their sick, and buried their dead.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

The picture is that of a well-bred young country clergyman, interested in the souls of his parishioners, but not unmindful of his own soul—and body. Further evidence of the curate's mundane interests is found in his correspondence of these days. A college mate, who probably wanted Wesley for a brother-in-law, wrote of his "most deserving, queer character," his "worthy personal accomplishments," his "noble endowments of mind," his "little and handsome person" and "obliging and desirable conversation." At the time, Wesley was carrying on a stately correspondence with the daughter of the rector of Stanton, a village not far from Oxford. The young lady, after the fashion of such matters in that period, was styled "Varanese." There are few memorials of this first attachment, but a letter remains describing a visit of Wesley to Stanton. Such phrases as "on this spot she sat," "along this path she walked," "here she showed that lovely instance of condescension," adorn the account.

Wesley's acquaintance at the Stanton rectory led to another affair, this time with Mrs. Pendarves, later famous as Mrs. Delany, intimate friend of George III and his queen. This eminent lady, who in her youth was a friend and correspondent of Dean Swift and in her old age introduced Miss Burney to court, was a widow at the time she met young Wesley. In her correspondence with him she was "Aspasia," he was "Cyrus." It must be admitted that, in such writing the curate was not at his best. His

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

knowledge of courts and fine society was second-hand, and one example of his sophomoric style will explain why Mrs. Pendarves eventually tired of her correspondent:

I spent some very agreeable moments last night in musing on this delightful subject and thinking to how little disadvantage Aspasia or Selina [Mrs. Pendarves' sister] would have appeared even in that faint light which the moon, glimmering through the trees, poured on that part of our garden in which I was walking. How little would the eyes of the mind that surveyed them have missed the absent sun! What darkness could have obscured gentleness, courtesy, humility—could have shaded the image of God! Sure none but that which shall never dare to approach them; none but vice, which shall ever be far away!

During the months following his progression to the master's degree, Wesley became serious. It was possibly at this time that he and his father had their only real difference. One of the daughters had brought shame upon the Epworth household, and the Rector's rage was terrible. The mother was for mercy, but the father was relentless and would have driven the luckless girl—Hetty it was—from the rectory. At this juncture, John is said to have preached a sermon "On the Charity due to Wicked Persons." Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's reconstruction of the story in his novel, "Hetty Wesley," is fanciful and unfair to Samuel Wesley, but John's sermon doubtless did much to soften the family indignation, although it did not prevent Hetty from

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

carrying out her rash vow to accept the first man who proposed.

By this time, Wesley had made acquaintance with the work of the great devotional writer, William Law, whose "Christian Perfection" had just been printed. Law quickened, if he did not awaken, Wesley's master passion, the pursuit of "holiness"—first for himself and then for others. At first John tried to introduce Law's discipline into the Epworth household, making even his calm-tempered mother angry. "Shall I be taught by a boy?" she cried; and the Rector ordered his son "to get out of the house with his apostolical nostrums." There is no evidence that there was any definite break, but a family of self-willed Wesleys was no place for John to practise his new calling of spiritual director.

In 1729 Wesley was recalled to Oxford. There he pursued his work as Greek lecturer and lecturer in philosophy and logic. As a teacher he acquired a reputation for faithfulness and thoroughness which was unusual among early eighteenth-century dons; but other than academic interests were growing upon him. Charles had come up to Oxford from Westminster, where he had been under his brother Samuel's care. Like his elder brothers, Charles had entered Christ College and had been a care-free, poetical student; but while John was curate at Wroote, Charles had fallen in with more serious students and had begun an informal club which met for study and devotion. To this group John joined

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

himself when he returned to Oxford and, because of his age and learning—and his masterful personality—soon became the leader. The club over which John now presided was to become one of the most famous in modern religious history.

Charles Wesley, the founder, had been in closer touch with his elder brother, Samuel, than had John. During the years when Samuel had so faithfully maintained his loyalty to Atterbury, Charles had been in his brother's house. There all the rigid, High-church notions to which Samuel was committed became a part of Charles's mental furniture. He came to Christ College, therefore, fortified not only by his brother's careful tutoring in the classics, but predisposed to a high view of the church. He was also eccentric, as became a poet and a Wesley. When the fine frenzy was upon him, he would burst into his brother's neat room, and, rapt in his composition, walk quite over John, table, books, and all.

Another of the company was George Whitefield, who was entered servitor at Pembroke, and who formerly had been a tapster in his mother's tavern at Gloucester. He had distinguished himself at the school of St. Mary de Crypt, in Gloucester, mainly for his acting in plays fostered by the school. His work in Oxford had been good, although he was handicapped by his poverty. When first at Oxford, he had been inclined to dissipation, but turning toward more serious thoughts, he had become acquainted with Charles Wesley and had joined him-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

self to the little club. Benjamin Ingham, who also belonged to the club, was a man of some property. He was of Queen's and was destined to be a close friend of the Wesleys. In later years, he left the Church of England and identified himself with the Moravians in Yorkshire. As more will be said in these pages about both Whitefield and Ingham, they may be dismissed here in favor of lesser-known men. The following notices, by indicating their later history, will show the quality of the men whom John Wesley led in Oxford.

James Hervey, who entered Lincoln in 1731, became one of the most popular religious writers of the eighteenth century. He fed the nascent romantic taste of the century with a lugubrious composition called "Meditations among the Tombs," which, bound with its companion piece, "Reflections on a Flower Garden," went through seventeen editions in as many years and netted the author seven hundred pounds in royalties, no insignificant sum in those days. His printer was Samuel Richardson, the novelist, and the first success was followed by several other popular works, chief among which was "Theron and Aspasia," calvinistic theology diluted with romantic scenery. This work sold nine thousand copies in two editions, evidence both of the perverted taste of the period and of Hervey's ability to satisfy it.

John Clayton, another member of the group, from Brasenose College, was from Manchester. He

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

was a High-churchman of High-churchmen and closely associated with the nonjuring bishop, Dr. Deacon, whose son was hanged for his part in the Jacobite uprising in 1745. Clayton was thought to have been private chaplain to the Young Pretender and was a fellow of the Collegiate Church of Manchester when he died. John Gambold, a Welshman, was entered servitor in Christ College. Like the others, he became a clergyman of the Church of England, but he later joined the Moravians and became one of their bishops. He edited their first English hymn-book, published in 1754.

Of other men connected with the club, one was Thomas Broughton, who served thirty-four years as secretary to the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge; another was Charles Kinchin, who became dean of Corpus Christi College, and another was Richard Hutchins, later D.D., who became Rector of Lincoln.

These were some of the men who composed the club which John Wesley dominated at Lincoln. "Mr. John Wesley was always the chief manager, for which he was very fit," wrote John Gambold. And he added:

He had, I think, something of authority in his countenance; though, as he did not want address, he could soften his manner, and point it as occasion required. Yet, he never assumed anything to himself above his companions. Any of them might speak their mind, and their words were as strictly regarded by him as his were by them.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

The club, first of all, set itself, under the direction of John Wesley, to obey the regulations of the colleges. John had made a reputation for conscientious performance of his own duties as lecturer and tutor, and he encouraged his friends to follow their studies and religious duties with the same assiduity. The little band attended divine service whenever possible and partook of the Lord's Supper every Sunday. In addition, they met in John Wesley's rooms at Lincoln at regular hours for devotion and to hear their leader read from some chosen book. Careful study was given to the New Testament, possibly in the new Greek edition of Bentley. Besides their club meetings and university duties, the members visited the sick and prisoners, preaching especially to the latter, and organized classes for poor children. They used both their own savings and money solicited from their friends to relieve distress and, occasionally, to purchase freedom for some worthy man imprisoned for debt.

These practices were all regulated, under John's leadership, in the most methodical manner. Nor were their outward duties alone subject to punctilious orderliness. The private lives of the members were also ordered in the most scrupulous way. Early rising was counted an important virtue, and the day was divided carefully between study, pious exercises, and charity. Each day was ended with painful self-examination, and on Saturday the activities

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

of the week were reviewed, sins carefully noted, and resolutions of better conduct dutifully made.

A part of one of Wesley's weekly examinations will illustrate the introspective discipline to which the members of the club subjected themselves. Wesley's record consists of questions which he addressed to himself and the resolutions which he made to cure defects. "Have I loved women or company more than God?" is his first question. The resolution which follows shows the nature of the offense which elicited this question. "*Resolve*: Never to let sleep or company hinder me from going to prayers." Another question was "*Pride?*" The Wesleys could use help against this sin, and Wesley notes as the remedy: "Consider death, the Scriptures." Often, in his diary, Wesley accused himself of idleness. This idleness consisted in reading light literature, such as the "History of Pyrates" (probably Captain Charles Johnson's "A General History of the Pyrates," printed in 1726), or in day-dreaming. To remedy this, Wesley resolved to spend six hours a day in study. To cure "intemperate sleep," he would rise at five. To prevent unclean thoughts, he would remember "God's omnipresence."

The club was High-church in principles. The members spoke of the Communion as a "sacrifice," were convinced that baptism regenerated the subject, and talked of "confession." These churchly opinions were doubtless influenced by their nonjur-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

ing friends, William Law and Thomas Deacon of Manchester, although Samuel Wesley, Senior, held the high notions to be expected in a convert, and his eldest son was High-churchman to the manner born.

The sight of a little group of men from several colleges—servitors, first-year men, tutors, and fellows—meeting together at regular hours for long study and devotion, or marching together to early sacramental services; some of them wearing their hair long, as John did, to save money; giving away all they could get; preserving puritanic abstinence from even innocent pleasures; and not hesitating to rebuke all who differed from them—this spectacle could not fail to excite ribald comment. The little company was dubbed “Bible Moths,” the “Holy Club,” the “Godly Club,” and at last “Methodists.” The name, which had been used in the seventeenth century to designate methodical people, was quickly taken up, and Methodists the followers of John Wesley remain to this day.

The opposition was supported by indolent fellows who disliked having their lax methods criticized, and by calm, balanced scholars who suspected anything which smacked of fanaticism. George Whitefield later confessed that, when he first joined the club, he was ashamed to be seen knocking on Wesley’s door. In 1732, an article in a weekly paper attacked the Methodists, accusing them of “enthusiasm” and hypocrisy. They were “the sorrowful brethren,” enemies of all decency and restraint. But

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

the Methodists were little disturbed. They endured this obloquy, perhaps enjoying the feeling of martyrdom which is the luxury of the young and the obsession of the fanatic. They took it for granted that offenses would come, and counted it to their glory that they stood out from the crowd. "You must be singular or be damned," said their leader; and the Methodists were both singular and heartily damned by the rest of the University.

The "Holy Club" monopolized Wesley's interest for the time. Here he could expend his energies in exploring his own soul and in directing his fellows. Mrs. Pendarves tried to renew the correspondence which she had allowed to lapse after Wesley had come dangerously near a proposal. Wesley's preoccupied answer to her ingratiating letter was sufficient to cool any ardor she may have had for him. "As for me," he wrote, "you do me no injury by your silence. It did indeed deprive me of much pleasure, and of a pleasure from which I ought to have received much improvement. But still, as it was one which I had no title to but your goodness, to withdraw it was no injustice."

Wesley was now studying with redoubled vigor. He was ordained priest in 1728, and his reading during the six months following included a formidable list: "Drake and Le Clerc's Physics, Burnet of the Reformation, Dennis against Pope, Salmon's Review, Welstead's Poems, Lee against Locke, Hickes of Schism, The Great Atlas, Dr. Hailey of

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Magnetism and Gravity, Ditton of Matter's Thinking, the Souls of Brutes, Watts, Keil's Principia, Cowley, Locke, Norris, Heautontimoumenos, Cheyne of Fevers, Ezra in Hebrew, Horace's Odes, Epodes and Satires, Life of Whiteways, Horace de Arte Poetica and Epistles, St. Matthew, part of the 15th chapter of Proverbs (which he translated into Latin verse), Virgil's Eclogues, Logic, Virgil's Georgics, St. Mark, St. Luke, the *Aeneid*, Life of Plutarch, Epictetus, the Acts, the Iliad, Romans, Xenophon, Colossians and Thessalonians, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes, Cornelius Nepos, Jackson, Cowley and Watts, On the Case of Subscribing, Prior and Berkeley, Satires of Juvenal, Vertot's Revolutions of Rome, Synge on Toleration, Clarendon, Milton, Rapin on Eloquence, Ephesians, and twelve Odes of Anacreon."

When to this reading is added a correspondence so large that he had to give at least one day a week to it, the picture of John Wesley's first activities as a Methodist is complete. In such constant exercise, looking after his club, studying for his own profit and that of his students, directing inquiring minds by interminable correspondence, even his tireless genius found ample employment. But he was not to remain long undisturbed in his Oxford seclusion.

The old Rector of Epworth was coming to the end of his days, working feverishly at his book in order that "Job" might be completed before he

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

died. Death, he said, had already shaken him by the hand, and would soon claim him altogether. There was another concern on the old man's mind. He wanted to see one of his sons settled in the living at Epworth, in order that his own ministry of four decades might be carried on and in order that Susannah might have a home. Samuel, who was now settled as head-master of Blundell's School at Tiverton, in Devon, could not come, and both father and eldest son agreed that John was the one for the place. The Rector believed that the living could be obtained for John if he would consent, so the matter was broached to the head of the Methodist Club. The living was a good one, two hundred pounds, and John and his mother, free from Samuel's extravagance, would have no need to worry about financial matters. John's reply to his father's request was wordy and thoroughly academic, thinly rationalizing John's preference of Oxford to the fen lands. He believed, he said, "that course of life tends most to the glory of God, wherein we can most promote holiness in ourselves and others." Oxford offered greater advantages for the cultivation of his own soul; his friends were there, and there he could have such "retirement" as was needful for his spiritual health. As for the old man's anxiety for his flock, John gave him eloquent comfort:

For yourself, I doubt not, but when your warfare is accomplished, when you are made perfect through sufferings, you shall come to your grave, not with sorrow, but as a

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

ripe shock of corn, full of years and victories. And he that took care of the poor sheep before you was born, will not forget them when you are dead.

Samuel, from Tiverton, joined his voice to his father's, but, after a verbose controversy, summed up the matter with the observation that none could move John's mind but He who made it.

It would seem that, after his father's death, John relented and made some half-hearted move to obtain the Epworth living, but, no doubt to his intense satisfaction, Epworth was disposed of to another petitioner. At any rate, John had made clear to all that Lincolnshire had no attraction for him.

Another call, the romance of which he was not to resist successfully, was in readiness for him even then. In 1732 Colonel James Edward Oglethorpe, who had distinguished himself on the Continent as a soldier and at home as an apostle of prison reform, undertook the organization of a new American colony. In Georgia Oglethorpe planned to provide a home for imprisoned debtors and other unfortunates. A board of trustees was formed, among whom was the first Earl of Egmont. Oglethorpe was acquainted with the Wesleys at least as early as 1728 when Samuel, Jr., addressed an ode to him in praise of his prison-reform work. The old Rector had taken keen interest in the colonization scheme and had written Oglethorpe in the interest of his son-in-law, whom Samuel Wesley would have sent as a missionary to the Indians. If he had been

A RESTLESS COLLEGIAN

younger, he said, he would have gone himself.

A former schoolmate of John was also one of the Georgia trustees, and he suggested that the Oxford Methodists would make suitable missionaries among undisciplined colonists in a new country. Dr. Burton, the trustee, had a lengthy correspondence with John concerning the project. At last John consented to go, believing that Georgia offered more opportunities for the cultivation of his spirit than Oxford. His chief motive in going to Georgia, he wrote on October 10, 1735, was the hope of saving his own soul. He hoped to learn the true sense of the gospel by preaching it to the heathen. The Indians had no corroding civilization to stand in the way of their understanding. Besides, in the idyllic environment of America, he would have unlimited opportunity to mortify the flesh, especially his curiosity, by living like the children of Nature on "water and the fruits of the earth."

The trustees decided to employ Charles Wesley as secretary for Indian affairs and secretary to Oglethorpe. Benjamin Ingham, who had independent means, also offered to go. Having secured two missionaries, both of whom had incomes from other sources, the trustees generously persuaded the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts to pay Wesley fifty pounds additional. These matters arranged, the worthy gentlemen rested content that they had driven a good bargain for the cause of the Lord and the colony of Georgia.

CHAPTER III

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

ON September 24, 1735, Lord Egmont and the other Georgia trustees spent an evening with the two Wesleys and Benjamin Ingham. The fact that these gentlemen were resolved to adventure into the new colony "to help the cause of religion" was set down by the trustees as "a particular providence and mark of God's favour" to the designs of the promoters. Three weeks later, Wesley, his brother Charles, and Ingham went on board the *Simmonds* at Gravesend.

The *Simmonds* was a ship of 250 tons, and was to be Oglethorpe's flag-ship. There were 112 colonists on board and 19 members of the crew. Of the colonists, 26 were Moravians, German emigrants going to Georgia as religious refugees. With the *Simmonds* went the *London Merchant*, with H. M. Sloop *Hawk* as escort. Contrary winds and the delay of the sloop kept the convoy at Cowes in the Isle of Wight until the tenth of December. But the missionaries were already at work.

The instructions of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel to its ministers were that they should at once begin instructing and reproofing their

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

charges. Accordingly, the trustees, shortly after Wesley went aboard, had a report that "Mr. Westley with the other clergymen were very zealous in discoursing them on religious subjects." Turning to Wesley's Journal, one can see how zealous the new missionaries were.

Having reduced their diet chiefly to rice and biscuits, the Wesleys divided out their time—and the time of the other passengers—in good Oxford Methodist fashion:

Our common way of living was this: From four in the morning till five each of us used private prayer. From five till seven we read the Bible together, carefully comparing it (that we might not lean to our own understanding) with the writings of the earliest ages. At seven we breakfasted. At eight were the public prayers, at which were present usually between thirty or forty of our eighty passengers. From nine to twelve I commonly learned German, and Mr. Delamotte Greek. My brother writ sermons, and Mr. Ingham read some treatise of divinity or instructed the children. At twelve we met to give an account to one another what we had done since our last meeting, and what we designed to do before our next. About one we dined. The time from dinner till four we spent with the people partly in public reading, partly in reading to those whom each of us had taken in charge, or in speaking to them severally, as need required. At four were the evening prayers, when either the Second Lesson was explained—as it always was in the morning—or the children were catechised and instructed before the congregation. From five to six we again used private prayer. From six to seven I read in our cabin to two or three of the passengers, of whom there were about eighty English on board, and each of my brethren to a few more in theirs. At seven I joined with

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

the Germans in their public service, while Mr. Ingham was reading between the decks to as many as desired to hear. At eight we met again, to exhort and instruct one another. Between nine and ten we went to bed, where neither the roaring of the sea nor the motion of the ship could take away the refreshing sleep which God gave us.

The first result of this "regular" manner of living was a complaint from a gentleman, son of a former governor of South Carolina, who said that the prayers in the public cabin were a great inconvenience to him. "He said he could not bear to stay in the room when so many people were in it, and that he could not stay out of it while they were there for fear of catching cold." A compromise was effected whereby morning prayers were held while the gentleman was in bed, and the afternoon prayers were read between decks. Nothing was said as to how those who were not gentlemen felt about the arrangement.

A regular mode of living did not satisfy the Oxford Methodists, so they drew up a formal agreement pledging themselves to three things: (1) that none would undertake anything of importance without first proposing it to the others; (2) that one of them would submit to the judgment of the others; and, (3) that, in case of a tie vote, the matter would be decided by lot. These resolutions, signed by the Wesleys, Ingham, and Charles Delamotte, son of a London sugar-merchant, who was going along out of loyalty to John, were essential to the Wesleys'

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

scheme of things. To this principle they remained loyal, even in matters of the heart for more than a decade.

According to Ingham, Oglethorpe was "a pattern of fatherly care and tender compassion, being always ready, night and day, to give up his own ease and conveniences to serve the poorest body among the people." An instance of charity on the soldier's part was that he gave up his cabin to a Mrs. Welch, who was about to be delivered of a child and was seriously ill. Wesley gave her Holy Communion, and she immediately began to recover, making a safe delivery. Wesley was not through with Mrs. Welch, but for the present he turned his attention to other matters. The following statements in the Journal are the entries of a zealous pastor who was also a bachelor of little experience with women:

Dec. 17. I endeavoured to reconcile Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Lawley with Mrs. Hawkins, with whom they had had a sharp quarrel. I thought it was effective; but the next day showed the contrary, both Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Lawley, and their husbands being so angry with me that they resolved (and prevailed on some others to do the same) never to be at prayers more.

Dec. 30. Being informed Mrs. Lawley was ill, I hoped she might be in a milder temper, and therefore spent some time with her, and told her of the alteration of her behaviour since her being associated with Mrs. Moore.

An ocean voyage in 1735, in a ship of 250 tons, was not a holiday excursion. This particular voy-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

age lasted from December 10 until February 5, and the travelers had the experience of at least three violent storms. John was not sick during the voyage and spent his time, when he was not occupied with his interminable religious exercises, in observing and recording the events of life on shipboard. His conduct during the storms must be appraised with the fact in mind that he had a great fear of the sea, a fear perhaps carried over from his boyhood amid the forbidding waters of the Isle of Axholme.

The third storm Wesley described as the most violent of all:

... "the waves of the sea were mighty and raved horribly. They rose up to the heavens above and clave down to hell beneath." The winds roared round about us, and—what I never heard before—whistled as distinctly as if it had been a human voice. The ship not only rocked to and fro with the utmost violence, but shook and jarred with so unequal, grating a motion that one could not but with great difficulty keep one's hold on anything, or stand a moment without it. Every ten seconds came a shock against the stern or side of the ship, which one would think should dash the planks in a thousand pieces. In the height of the storm, a child, privately baptized before, was brought to be publicly received into the Church. . . . At seven I went to the Germans. I had long before observed the great seriousness of their behaviour. . . . There was now an opportunity of trying whether they were delivered from the spirit of fear, as well as from that of pride, anger and revenge. In the midst of the psalm where-with their service began, wherein we were mentioning the power of God, the sea broke over, split the mainsail in pieces,

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

covered the ship, and poured in between the decks, as if the great deep had already swallowed us up. A terrible screaming began among the English. The Germans looked up and without intermission calmly sang on. I asked one of them afterwards, "Was you not afraid?" He answered, "I thank God, no." I asked, "But were not your women and children afraid?" He replied mildly, "No, our women and children are not afraid to die." From them I went to their crying, trembling neighbors, and found myself enabled to speak with them in boldness and to point out to them the difference in the hour of trial between him that feareth God and him that feareth Him not. At twelve the wind fell. This was the most glorious day which I had hitherto seen.

The man whose natural fear could not withstand his curiosity as to the length of the interval between the big waves and whose religious interests made this a "glorious" day was no ordinary clerical meddler.

On February 4, almost two months from the day of departure from Cowes, the *Simmonds* came within sight of land. In the evening lesson were the words, carefully noted by the missionaries, "A great door and effectual is opened." The next day the ships came into the Savannah River.

The new colony of Georgia lay between the Carolinas on the north and Spanish Florida on the south. The one was jealous and the cause of constant trouble as a commercial rival; the other was always a menace, since England and Spain were on the verge of hostilities. The settlements in Georgia were almost all along the coast-line from Savan-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

nah to St. Simon's Island, a distance of about one hundred miles. Savannah was a nondescript village on a bluff overlooking the river. There were some two hundred houses in the town, and in 1737 Wesley counted 518 inhabitants. The town was surrounded with strips of white sand, wood, pine-barren, and a swamp. On St. Simon's Island was a new settlement called Frederica, built on a bluff and in the midst of savannas and woods. Various emigrant settlements of Scots and Salzburgers were scattered about, twenty to twenty-five miles from the main towns. The alternation of scrubby pine-land, swamps, and marshes, lying in the edge of a great wilderness, made strange land for the debtors, ruined gentlemen, sturdy Scots, and pious Germans who came to the new colony, and yet stranger for the clergymen who came to minister to them.

John Wesley had come hoping to be a missionary to the Indians, but he had agreed to take care of the parish of Savannah until a new minister could be sent out. In the meantime, he was concerned to learn all he could about the people among whom he hoped eventually to preach. A few days after the arrival of the convoy, Wesley had his curiosity gratified by an interview with a famous Indian chief. This chief, Tomo-chi-chi, whom Oglethorpe had taken to England a few years before, came with his wife, a nephew, and a native whom Wesley called the "king" of the Savannah nation. The king dressed the part, with his face stained red in several places,

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

his hair ornamented with beads, a scarlet feather over his ear, and a blanket for a parade uniform. Tomo-chi-chi's wife brought a jar of milk and one of honey, and expressed the wish that the white priests would feed the Indians with milk, for they were children, and be sweet as honey to them.

It was all as if out of a story-book, and Wesley's minute account testifies to his appreciation; but he is no less honest in recording the plain and thoroughly practical remarks of Tomo-chi-chi. When he was in England, said the chief, he really wanted the missionaries to come; but he and his people had been disillusioned. The French and Spaniards were building forts, and the English traders were liars. Nevertheless, he was glad to have the priests; he hoped his wise men would hear them. But his people did not want to be converted as the Spanish converted; they wanted instruction.

Thus began Wesley's ministry in America. During the course of it, he was forced to go often to settlements outside of Savannah; and his means of traveling was walking, or riding in a flat-bottomed barge, a rough vessel in troubled waters. Once he fell asleep on deck to wake up under water, having rolled overboard in his sleep. At another time, walking with Delamotte and a guide to an inland settlement, he was lost, and, after wading swamps breast deep, he and his companions slept on the cold ground without a fire. His own love of outdoors, in spite of his natural physical frailty, carried him through

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

his Georgia labors uncomplainingly. "I have been thoroughly wet with these rains more than once," he wrote in his Journal, "yet without any harm at all. And I have lain many nights in the open air, and received all the dews that fell; and so, I believe might any one, if his constitution was not impaired by the softness of a genteel education."

In the Georgia wilderness, with the rude huts of Savannah and Frederica housing financial failures, ne'er-do-wells, and ambitious scoundrels, with a handful of honest working men, Wesley decided to organize a Methodist Club after the Oxford fashion. In April, 1736, the companions agreed:

(1) to advise the more serious among them [the parishioners] to form themselves into a sort of little society, and to meet once or twice a week, in order to reprove, instruct, and exhort one another. (2) To select out of these a smaller number for a more intimate union with each other, which might be forwarded, partly by our conversing singly with each other, and partly by inviting them altogether to our house; and this, accordingly, we determined to do every Sunday in the afternoon.

At Savannah, John set about a house-to-house visitation of his parishioners, an evidence of zeal of which the trustees heard with approval the next year.

Even in this zealous ministry there was occasion for offense, since the High-churchmanship of the Wesleys was resented by their parishioners. John refused to baptize a child except by immersion unless

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

the parents would signify that it was too weak for this method to be used with safety. In this he had the authority of church law, but he was acting contrary to common practice. "They say they are Protestants," one objector reported to Wesley, "but as for you, they can not tell what religion you are of." John's chief entanglement, however, was in troubles in which Charles had become involved. Charles, serving as secretary to Oglethorpe, was at Frederica, where Oglethorpe was taken up with alarms of Spanish invasion. Charles's "Journal" is nervous with the continuous tension of the little English settlement expectant of Indian outrages and Spanish cruelties. In Frederica also were the two trouble-makers, Mrs. Welch and Mrs. Hawkins, the surgeon's wife. These women confessed to Charles that they had been intimate with Oglethorpe. They then told Oglethorpe that the parson was circulating reports concerning them in Frederica. The purpose of the women in fomenting this trouble is hard to discern. Biographers of Wesley seem to think that they were both in love with Oglethorpe and designed breaking the puritanic influence which they imagined the Wesleys had over the Governor. The Wesleys later exonerated Oglethorpe of all blame, although they, at first, accepted the statement of the women at face value as accounting for the General's uncommon kindness to Mrs. Welch and Mrs. Hawkins on board ship.

Whatever the truth of the charges against Ogle-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

thorpe, the result of the matter was that Charles was out of favor with his chief, who went so far as to leave him when attacked by fever without provisions or medical care. Charles, who was too proud to ask Oglethorpe for help, at last sent for his brother. John came at once, traveling the hundred miles from Savannah to Frederica for the first time. He was comforted on landing by turning to his Bible and finding as the first Scripture on which his eye lighted—his favorite method of bibliomancy—the words, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" He at once helped his feeble brother to walk into the woods, where they discussed the latter's affairs in Latin for fear of eavesdroppers. John remained six days and convinced Oglethorpe of his brother's innocence, but went away very doubtful of Oglethorpe. When, a few days later, news from the south made the General prepare to leave hurriedly with his men, he called for Charles. Some one had brought Oglethorpe his mourning sword by mistake, and the soldier was certain that he was going to his death. He and Charles had mutual explanations, and the General gave his secretary a ring with the assurance that this would procure him aid from powerful friends in England. "The letters," said Oglethorpe, "show that the Spaniards have long been seducing our allies, and intend to cut us off at a blow. I fall by my friends: Gascoin [commander of the *Hawk*] whom I have made; the Carolina people, whom I depended upon to

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

send their promised succours." Charles blessed him in Latin, the General quoted some of his own poetry, and the expedition set out.

Oglethorpe returned alive; and Charles was reinstated in the General's favor. For a few weeks, Charles exchanged places with his brother, and John enjoyed the blessings of Frederica society. The reader might be spared the somewhat lurid pages in which John told of his trials at Frederica if they did not cast such a brilliant light upon conditions in the pioneer colony and upon the character of Wesley.

Charles had written at length to John concerning the situation at Frederica, taking care to hide in Greek his sentiments concerning Mrs. Welch and Mrs. Hawkins. When John arrived to take his brother's place, Mrs. Hawkins sent for him and inquired what was meant by two Greek words which had been used, and which had been read by some one who pried into the correspondence. All the women in Frederica felt their honor involved, said Mrs. Hawkins. John gave a straightforward answer: that these were his brother's words used before the season of explanation which had ensued on the occasion of his previous visit; that no other women in town need be uneasy about them, for the words referred only to her and to Mrs. Welch. The logic of his answer was admirable, but the effect was unexpected by Wesley. She started up, called him a scoundrel, a pitiful rascal, and the like. Her hus-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

band came in, and she told him that John had said, "That dog [Charles] meant her by those d—d words." Hawkins joined in the chorus, and Wesley was grieved to tears. The trouble was carried to Oglethorpe, who rebuked the Hawkinses. ✓

But the matter was not ended. A few days later, Wesley was summoned again by Mrs. Hawkins. He went, but asked her maid to remain in the room. The amiable lady first drew a pistol and threatened to shoot him through the head with a brace of balls. When he seized that hand, she brandished a pair of scissors in the other. Then she threw herself on him and forced him back on the bed, crying that she would have his heart or his heart's blood. The scene can not be told except in John's words. The Oxford fellow, in the clutches of a termagant, was thinking first of the scandal. ✓

I was very unwilling either to cry out, which must publish to all the world what, for her sake, I desired should be more private; or to attempt rising by force, which could not have been done without hurting her. Just then the maid came in, whom she ordered to reach a knife, swearing she would be the death of her if she did not. The woman stood trembling, not knowing what to do. Her two boys [servants] came in next, whom she bid to hold my hands, and I desired to take hold of their mistress. But they did not dare to do either. Then came in Mr. Davison, the constable, and Mr. Reed, who, of my desire, were going to take her by the arm, when Mr. Hawkins came in, asked what that scoundrel did in his house, and commanded them at their peril not to touch his wife. Upon this encouragement she struggled again to

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

get her hands loose; but not being able, seized on my cassock with her teeth and tore both the sleeves of it to pieces, and then fixed upon my arm, four men (for Mr. Robinson and Ward were now come) standing by, and not daring to hinder her. I then spoke to Mr. Hawkins, who seeing the company increase, took her round the waist and lifted her up. I went to Mr. Oglethorpe and gave him a simple narration of what had happened. He sent for them both and for Mr. Horton. She defended all, saying we had not done her justice for the wrong she had received, and therefore she had done herself justice. After a long hearing, her husband and she, promising better behaviour for the future, were dismissed.

Charles had had enough of Georgia. Consequently, at the first opportunity, he resigned, and Oglethorpe accepted the resignation. The soldier offered a little advice to Charles on his departure:

On many accounts I should recommend to you marriage rather than celibacy. You are of a social temper, and would find in a married state the difficulties of working out your salvation exceedingly lessened, and your helps as much increased.

Charles was intrusted with important documents for the trustees, and embarked on the sixteenth of August for home. He had the bad fortune of a drunken captain and a leaking ship, so that, after considerable delay in Boston, where they were landed for a time, he arrived a month overdue in London. There the ship had been given up for lost, to the intense distress of the trustees, who seemed not to be quite certain whether they were sorrow-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

ing for the supposedly shipwrecked parson or for the papers he carried with him.

John accompanied his brother to Charlestown and made some arrangements there for the publication of the hymn-book on which he was working—a book published in Charlestown the next year. Then he returned to take up his duties in Savannah. But he could not shake off his interest in Frederica. On the twelfth of October, he consulted with his friends concerning the "poor people" of Frederica, and decided that he should revisit them, leaving Ingham in charge at Savannah. The reader of the following pages will detect another reason for Wesley's concern in the Frederica parishioners.

In a colony with all too many coarse men and unscrupulous women, the young scholar had been attracted toward a girl of obvious innocence and still more obvious good looks. On March 13, 1736, Wesley had for the first time met Sophia Hopkey, niece of Causton, chief magistrate of Savannah. The young lady was about eighteen years old, attractive, intelligent, and possessed of some property in her own right. From the time of their first meeting, Sophia Hopkey appears at intervals in the diary. She and a friend were regular attendants, and sometimes the only ones at Wesley's early morning services. She was "open and affected," by which Wesley meant interested in religious matters. Gradually, "Miss Sophy" formed the habit of coming to the parsonage to discuss religious questions with the

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

young clergyman. Early in their acquaintance she nursed him through an attack of fever. Miss Sophy's uncle, the magistrate Causton, soon saw the direction of his niece's affections and broadly hinted as much to Wesley.

When John returned from Charlestown the young lady was at Frederica, sent there to get her away from a disreputable lover. When Wesley arrived at Frederica in October, 1736, he found Miss Sophy "scarce a shadow of what she was when he left her." He attributed her disconsolate appearance to the fact that supposedly "harmless company" had stolen away all her spiritual strength while he was gone and that most of her good resolutions were vanished. She told him that she was resolved to return to England. Her spiritual physician proceeded to prescribe for her. "I begged her to pray earnestly to God to direct her to what was best. I then read to her some of the most affecting parts of the "Serious Call" and of Ephrem Syrus."

In the evening I asked Miss Sophy if she was still determined to go to England. On her answering, "Yes," I offered several arguments drawn from the topics of religion against it. But they did not appear to make any impression. Then I pressed her upon the head of friendship. Upon which she burst into tears and said, "Now my resolution begins to stagger"; as it did more and more every day.

When Wesley was ready to return to Savannah, it was determined by Oglethorpe that Miss Sophy

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

should accompany him. The General, having advised Charles to marry, was determined himself to play Cupid to John. The latter agreed to escort Miss Sophy, but wrote in his Journal:

I saw the danger to myself, but yet had a good hope I should be delivered out of it, (1) because it was not my choice which brought me into it; (2) because I still felt in myself the same desire and design to live a single life; and (3) because I was persuaded should my desire and design be changed, yet her resolution to live single would continue.

On the journey Wesley regaled his young charge with Bishop Patrick's "Prayers" and with the first volume of Fleury's "History of the Church." Beginning "a close conversation" with her on the subject of "Christian holiness," he was delighted when she owned her ignorance and showed an earnest desire that he instruct her. Decidedly she was dear to him both as an object of love and as an audience. On the way to Savannah, they spent one night on an island, crew and passengers sleeping around the camp-fire.

Observing in the night, the fire we lay by burning bright, that Miss Sophy was broad awake, I asked her, "Miss Sophy, how far are you engaged to Mr. Mellichamp [the worthless fellow to whom Miss Sophy was supposed to be engaged]?" She answered, "I have promised him either to marry him or to marry no one at all." I said (which indeed was the expression of a sudden wish, not of any formed design) "Miss Sophy, I should think myself happy if I was to spend my life

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

with you." She burst out into tears and said, "I am every way unhappy. I won't have Tommy; for he is a bad man. And I can have none else." She added, "Sir, you don't know the danger you are in. I beg you to say no word more on this head," and after a while, "When others had spoken to me on the subject, I felt an aversion to them. But I don't feel any to you. We may converse on other subjects as freely as ever." Both my judgment and will acquiesced in what she said, and we ended our conversation with a psalm.

Wesley continued to try to cure what he imagined to be Miss Sophy's religious ailment by liberal doses of the Greek Fathers and of later devotional writers. The idea of marriage he could not get out of his mind, but he could think up reasons against it, as, "(1) because it would probably obstruct the design of my coming into America, the going among the Indians; and (2) because I was not strong enough to bear the complicated temptations of a married state."

Confident in his reasons, Wesley broadened the scope of his protégée's instructions. His daily program for her began to take sizable proportions.

Immediately after breakfast, we all joined in Hicke's *Devotions*. She was then alone till eight. I taught her French between eight and nine, and at nine we joined in prayer again. She then read or wrote French till ten. In the evening, I read to her and some others select parts of Ephrem Syrus, and afterwards Dean Young's and Mr. Reeve's *Sermons*. We always concluded with a psalm.

The rôle of impersonal tutor was hard to preserve, and the Journal testifies to his difficulties.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

"This I began with a single eye. But it was not long before I found it a task too hard for me to preserve the same intention with which I began, in such intimacy of conversation as ours was." The following quotation will show how hard his task really was:

Feb. 27, 1737. After all the company but Miss Sophy was gone, Mr. Delamotte went out and left us alone again. Finding her still the same, my resolution failed. At the end of a very serious conversation, I took her by the hand, and, perceiving she was not displeased, I was so utterly disarmed, that that hour I should have engaged myself for life, had it not been for the full persuasion of her entire sincerity, and in consequence of which I doubted not but that she was resolved (as she had said) "never to marry while she lived."

A moment's reflection when she was gone convinced me that I had done foolishly. And I once more resolved by God's help to be more wary for the future. Accordingly, though I saw her every day in the following week, I touched her not.

Wesley consulted his Moravian friends, and even cast lots to find out whether he should marry. The men he consulted were somewhat ambiguous; the lot said, "think of it no more." He acquiesced cheerfully enough in so far that he made no further advances himself, but he showed some zeal in trying to dissuade the young lady from an engagement with another—her third lover. Miss Sophy gave the dilatory Wesley every opportunity to come back to the point; then, as he still delayed, she finally announced

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

her engagement to one Williamson. At the end of a painful and fruitless interview with them both, Wesley exhorted the couple ". . . to remember the many instructions and advices I had given her. . . . I kissed them both," he concluded, "and took my leave of her as one I was to see no more."

I came home and went into my garden [continues the Journal]. I walked up and down, seeking rest but finding none. From the beginning of my life to this hour I had not known one such as this. God let loose my inordinate affection upon me, and the poison thereof drank up my spirit. I was as stupid as if half awake, and yet in the sharpest pain I ever felt. To see her no more: that thought was the piercings of a sword; it was not to be borne, nor shaken off. I was weary of the world, of light, of life. Yet one way remained, to speak to God—a very present help in time of trouble. And I did seek after God, but I found Him not. I forsook Him before; now He forsook me. Then indeed the snares of death were about me; the pains of hell overtook me. Yet I struggled for life; and though I had neither words nor thoughts, I lifted up my eyes to the Prince that is highly exalted, and supplied the place of them as I could; and about four o'clock He so far took the cup from me that I drank so deeply of it no more.

Before marrying, Miss Sophy waited a little longer, apparently hoping that Wesley would press his case. Then she ran off with Williamson and married him. Wesley immediately developed scruples about admitting her to Communion, on the ground that she had deceived him about the state of her heart concerning her lovers. At last, he repelled her

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

from the Communion on the technical charge, that she had not given legal notification of her intention to communicate after an absence of several months. The husband responded with a suit for damages to the amount of one thousand pounds.

The affidavit which was filed accused Wesley of having attempted to seduce Sophia Hopkey, promising that she would be holier for living with him, and that he would make his Methodistic requirements easier for her. This affidavit, a copy of which Wesley preserved with his papers, was sworn to by Sophia herself, August 16, 1737. The testimony against Wesley must be weighed with due regard to the character of his accusers. Causton, the magistrate, had been under suspicion and charges for several years. The trustees were constantly hearing complaints against him, and he was unquestionably overbearing, contentious, and very likely dishonest. Williamson was not remarkable for sense or religion according to Wesley, although something must be allowed here for bias. Nothing can be alleged against Sophia except that she was fascinated by the handsome young don, a Prince Charming from the world of which she had dreamed; and that to attract him she assumed a religious devotion which she did not feel. Her exasperation at his perverse restraint, coupled with natural resentment of his assumption of control over her, may well account for her willingness to ruin him.

In support of Wesley's account of his conduct

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

should be quoted the opinions of two competent witnesses who were in position to know the facts. The Rev. Alexander Gordon, Commissary of the Church in Carolina, wrote the Bishop of London, that "however he [Wesley] might not be acquitted of some imprudence and unguarded conversation, yet he verily believed him innocent of anything criminal either in fact or intention." Lord Egmont, as will appear later, with all the evidence before him, thought Wesley had been indiscreet, but in no way criminal. That Wesley was in love with Sophia is beyond doubt, but the conflict of his desires and his own scruples accounts for his strange conduct. He repelled Miss Sophy from the Communion and then rationalized his motives for doing so. There was also a domineering attitude on his part that Williamson and Miss Sophy alike had cause to resent. The record will exonerate Wesley from the gross charges brought against him; it will not bear witness to his having used good sense or even ordinary tact.

The grand jury indicted Wesley on ten counts, nine of them relating to ecclesiastical usages, as his refusal to baptize a child by other than immersion unless the parents would testify that the child was too weak for such baptism, and his refusal to read the burial service over the body of a dissenter. The tenth count was on the complaint of Sophia. A minority dissented from this presentment, but Caus-
ton had used all his influence to procure a return

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

against Wesley. In doing so the magistrate rendered himself so obnoxious to the grand jury that they returned against him at the same sitting, and a year later he was removed from office on a charge of embezzlement.

Wesley appeared to answer the charges but refused to plead on the nine ecclesiastical points, alleging that the court had no jurisdiction in such matters. In this he was technically right, although the charges were mainly sustainable. Wesley's High-church practices were well known and extremely offensive to many of his parishioners. But they were also legal. Alexander Gordon said that the ecclesiastical charges were "all either impertinent, false, or frivolous," and Lord Egmont upon inquiry found to his astonishment that Wesley was acting within his rights in his High-churchmanly requirements. On the tenth point, Sophia Williamson's charges, Wesley asked for immediate trial.

While he waited for the trial which never took place, he went about his duties and summed up his observations concerning the colony and its surroundings. Charles had already given Lord Egmont an account of the state of the colony which spoke well for the Wesleys' powers of observation. John now recorded in his Journal a short, but very careful, survey of Georgia.

The Indians, whom once he had pictured as "noble savages" living the "life of Nature," he had learned

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

were far from the idyllic creatures of eighteenth-century imaginings. He speaks best of the Georgia Indians, but his account of them is not flattering:

... every one doeth what is right in his own eyes; and if it appears wrong to his neighbor, the person aggrieved usually steals on the other unawares, and shoots him, scalps him, or cuts off his ears. . . . They are likewise all, except perhaps the Choctaws, gluttons, drunkards, thieves, dissemblers, liars. They are implacable, unmerciful; murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers, murderers of their own children—it being a common thing for a son to shoot his father or mother because they are old and past labour, and for a woman either to procure abortion, or to throw her child into the next river, because she will go with her husband to the war.

This was the account of the Indians which passed for true among colonists living in fear of attack, and there was plenty of evidence to support such an account. A Frenchman from New Orleans had told Wesley of his capture by savages.

I and one more were saved by the warrior who took us [ran the Frenchman's story]. The manner of burning the rest was holding lighted canes to their arms and legs, and several parts of their bodies, for some time, and then for a while taking them away. They likewise stuck burning pieces of wood into their flesh all round, in which condition they kept them from morning till evening.

As to the Indians' daily life, the Frenchman said that "they do nothing but eat and drink, and smoke,

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

from morning till night; and, in a manner, from night till morning." "See the religion of Nature truly delineated!" exclaimed Wesley.

Next to the Indians, Wesley had been interested in the German emigrants. They were from a colony of Bohemian refugees who had been given shelter on the Saxon estates of a German pietist, Count Zinzendorf. One of the picturesque figures of the eighteenth century, Zinzendorf, had organized a community of these Moravians, and from this settlement at Herrnhut, in Saxony, missionaries had been sent to Greenland, the West Indies, South America, and Africa. Wesley had been first attracted to these Moravians when on shipboard they had been unafraid during the storms. He had talked with their leaders and observed the life of the emigrants. He admired their systematic, simple method of living and their apparent peace and joy. Their teaching was that man is saved by faith, an inner trust, rather than by laborious obedience or performance of good works. All through his stay in Georgia, Wesley had gone to them for advice, and he devoted his time in his last hurried days, when he was expecting the grand jury's action, to a careful chronicle of a theological conversation with one of their leaders.

Wesley's interest in Georgia was now exhausted. He saw no possibility of instructing the Indians, nor in spite of Tomo-chi-chi's welcoming address, had he heard "of any Indians on the Continent of

WITH OGLETHORPE IN GEORGIA

America who had the least desire of being instructed." He felt under no obligations to Savannah except to tell the trustees the true state of the colony. Since the magistrates would not set the date for his trial, he posted a notice that he intended leaving and prepared to depart. The magistrates published an order forbidding his going, but made no effort to detain him. His leaving was the easiest solution of the matter for them. Accordingly, the evening of December 2, 1737, John Wesley left Savannah for Charlestown, where he set sail for England.

A disappointed and disillusioned man, having seen a kind of life of which he had never dreamed, having learned how little he could depend upon his fellows or upon himself, Wesley came away haunted by the assurance and peace of the simple German peasants whom neither outward storms nor inward passions seemed to disturb. "I went to America, to convert the Indians," he wrote on his homeward voyage, "but oh, who shall convert me?"

CHAPTER IV

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

ON February 1, 1738, John Wesley landed at Deal, missing Whitefield, who was leaving for America, by only a day. Charles was surprised with the news of his brother's arrival, but understood that he had returned to tell the true state of the colony of Georgia. Oglethorpe, who was in England at the time, was uneasy at the news and thought that Wesley should not have come back without leave of the trustees.

On the eighth, Wesley waited on the trustees and gave them "a short but plain account of the state of the colony." He told them that about one hundred idle persons in Georgia had left within two months. The year before, the people had been able to supply corn enough for only half the colony, and half the trees in the garden were dead. He added that the colony was healthy, and gave a good report of the industry of the Salzburgers. The trustees seemed surprised at Wesley's account of the fewness of the people, and Oglethorpe told Charles that there was a strong spirit rising against John,

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

because people said that he had come back to do mischief to the colony.

Georgia affairs were in a critical condition. The trustees were trying to obtain more support, but they were meeting strong opposition which threatened the very existence of the colony. There were bitter disputes with Carolina, and to add to their troubles, there were rumors that Oglethorpe would be displaced for fear that he might embroil the nation with Spain. It was at this juncture that Wesley returned with his report of bad conditions.

On February 22 Wesley appeared again before the trustees and gave them several papers and certificates for his own justification, "whereby," concluded Egmont in his diary, "it appeared indeed that he was guilty of indiscretion, but that Causton our head bailiff was much more to blame." So serious were the charges which Wesley made against Causton that Lord Egmont attributed to them the resignation of two of the council. "In truth," observed Egmont, "the bad account of Causton's behaviour brought over by Mr. Wesley, our minister at Savannah, is enough to make all of us quit."

As to the charges against Wesley, the trustees seem to have been satisfied that they amounted to little besides proof of errors of judgment. Causton's previous record would discount his testimony, and the trustees were disposed to accept Wesley's new accusations against the head-bailiff of Savannah. But when, on Wednesday, April 26, Wesley left his li-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

cense as minister of Savannah with the trustees, thus resigning his work there, they accepted it "with great pleasure," for he appeared to them "to be a very odd mixture of a man, an enthusiast and at the same time a hypocrite, wholly distasteful to the greater part of the inhabitants, and an incendiary of the people against the magistracy." ✓

Thus Wesley returned to England to be cleared of the charges against him, but to have his resignation accepted with great pleasure. His Oxford experiences had inured him to others' disapproval; but now he was himself convinced that his mission to America had been largely a failure. With his rigorous, even ascetic views, he could not but look upon his passion for Sophia Hopkey as a victory of his lower nature. The sojourn in America, so he wrote in his Journal, had "in some measure" humbled him and shown him what was in his heart. He had learned also that his judgment of men was very fallible. Charles had said of his brother that he "was born for the benefit of knaves." Reflecting on his experiences in the colony, John Wesley remarked that they had taught him "to beware of men." ✓

There had been some gains from the Georgia experience, according to his judgment, and they were chiefly four. He had learned to read German, Spanish, and Italian—he already knew French. He had been confirmed in his belief that he could leave his affairs to be directed of the Lord, using the lot

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

where he had no other means of discerning the divine will. He had been delivered from his fear of the sea, a heritage of his childhood in Lincolnshire. Finally, he had come to know the Moravians, whom he considered model Christians.

Looking over this characteristic summary of personal losses and gains in Georgia, one can understand the way which Wesley was going. His long years of self-discipline, his present discouragement, and his rejection of marriage as a channel of escape for his pent-up life energies, all pointed toward a new arrangement of his psychic pattern. He was ready for a mystical conversion of the type experienced by Luther and Paul—although not of the type recorded by Augustine. Taught by the Moravians to believe that a personal attitude ("faith") is sufficient for salvation, and that one can accept his salvation as an accomplished fact, not as something to be striven after, Wesley was consciously seeking just such a rearrangement of his inner life as came to him. Psychologically he was ready to enter upon a time when confidence would supplant his previous fear, when all the energy which had been taken up in inner conflicts would be released into the one channel which, with few exceptions, was to be the sole outlet of his energies to the end of his days—the propagation of what he called practical religion. The familiar account of Wesley's conversion experience may be quoted again. The day was Wednesday, May 24, 1738.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

I think it was about five this morning, that I opened my Testament on those words, "There are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, even that ye should be partakers of the divine nature." . . . Just as I went out, I opened it again on those words, "Thou art not far from the kingdom of God." In the afternoon I was asked to go to St. Paul's. The anthem was "Out of the deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord: Lord, hear my voice. O let Thine ears consider well the voice of my complaint. If Thou, Lord, will be extreme to mark what is done amiss, O Lord, who may abide it? For there is mercy with Thee; therefore shalt Thou be feared. O Israel, trust in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption. And he shall redeem Israel from all his sins."

In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the *Epistle to the Romans*. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.

With the zeal of a new convert Wesley set about persuading others that they must have just such an experience as he himself had had. Charles had been converted a few days before and was a willing ally in the new proselyting efforts of his brother. In later years, John was to change his mind as to the necessity of every one undergoing just such an inner adjustment as had been his lot; but at this time he had no doubts, and his zeal was disturbing to less

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

enthusiastic souls. The mother of James Hutton, a bookseller "at the Bible and Sun without Temple Bar," became so alarmed that she wrote Samuel Wesley at Tiverton:

Your brother John seems to be turned a wild enthusiast, or fanatic, and, to our very great affliction, is drawing our two children into these wild notions, by their great opinion of Mr. John's sanctity and judgment. It would be a great charity to many other honest well-meaning, simple souls, as well as to my children, if you could either confine, or convert Mr. John when he is with you. For after his behaviour on Sunday the 28th May, when you hear it, you will think him not a quite right man. Without even acquainting Mr. Hutton with any of his notions or designs, when Mr. Hutton had ended a sermon of Bishop Blackall's, which he had been reading in his study to a great number of people; Mr. John got up, and told the people, that five days before he was not a Christian, and this he was as well assured of as that five days before he was not in that room, and the way for them all to be Christians was to believe, and own, that they were not now Christians.

Mrs. Hutton concluded with some wild stories about a ball of fire reported to have fallen upon a young woman and to have "fired her soul," and of a young man who dreamed of meeting God and Christ.

Samuel was bothered, but he seemed more interested in hearing details than in taking practical steps to confine or convert John. He would like to know about the ball of fire—"an odd sort of fire that"—and what that had to do with his brothers. Mrs.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Hutton, good woman, had been vague as to the connection. The stories, if they were connected with his brothers, looked like signs of madness. "I do not hold it at all unlikely, that perpetual intense-
ness of thought, and want of sleep, may have dis-
ordered my brother. I have been told that the Quak-
er's introversion of thought, has ended in mad-
ness." And of this last he added, with a curious
anticipation of modern psychology, "It is a studi-
ous stopping of every thought as fast as it arises,
in order to receive the spirit." He concluded with
a pious prayer that God would "stop the progress
of this lunacy."

John, far from being stopped, was now all afame
with the ambition to visit Herrnhut, in Saxony, the
home of the Moravians. He had embarked for
Georgia hoping to learn the true gospel by studying
the reactions of the "noble savage" to his preaching;
disappointed there, he now believed that Herrnhut
would prove his spiritual Eldorado. He had now,
he thought, learned the first lesson of the gospel;
he hoped that "conversing with those holy men who
were themselves living witnesses of the full power
of faith, and yet able to bear with those that are
weak" would be a means of "establishing" his soul.
He plunged at once into plans for this new pilgrim-
age, and, on the twelfth of June, left for Germany.

The company included five Englishmen and three
Germans. Besides Benjamin Ingham, Wesley took
along a tailor by the name of Viney, who spoke Ger-

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

man, for Wesley's German acquired from the Moravians was as yet imperfect. Along the way the little party was entertained by kindred spirits, for they found groups of pietists in nearly every city. Wesley's Journal is, as usual, filled with a mixture of comments upon strange scenery and religious conditions.

In Holland the pilgrims were astonished at a new treatment "which is not heard of in England." Several inns refused to entertain them, and Wesley remarks coldly on both the hospitality which he finally obtained and the sights of the towns. But Amsterdam roused his enthusiasm:

The exact neatness of all the buildings here, the nice cleanliness of the streets (which, we were informed, were all washed twice a week), and the canals which run through all the main streets, with rows of trees on either side, make this the pleasantest city which I have ever seen.

Cologne received scant praise from the now somewhat weary pedestrians. It was "the ugliest, dirtiest city I ever yet saw with my eyes," said Wesley. The cathedral was "mere heaps upon heaps, a huge, misshapen thing, which has no more of symmetry than of neatness belonging to it." He added some details in a letter to his mother: "Many of the stones are broken, the windows dusty & full of cobwebs, & the pavement less clean than that of many English stables."

Wesley shared prevailing sentiment concerning

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Gothic, preferring Wren's work to the great cathedrals of his own land; but in justification of his criticism of Cologne one should remember that the cathedral was unfinished in 1738 and was doubtless as misshapen as Wesley says. Besides, the neat soul of the little scholar revolted at the dirty German buildings and yearned for the nice cleanliness of Dutch streets which were washed twice a week.

The views from his Rhine boat were described by Wesley in a letter to his mother. In his Journal, he merely made the conventional eighteenth-century comment that the castles on the crags afforded some "agreeable prospects." But Wesley's mind was excited by his approach to Marienborn where he was to meet the great Count Zinzendorf, head of the Moravian Church. Here he filled his Journal with theological notes gained from conversations, chiefly in Latin, with his hosts.

The Moravians later related several incidents which they said happened at Marienborn, but which Wesley did not record. They said that Wesley was not allowed to receive the Communion, because he was thought to be *homo perturbatus*—whatever they meant by that. Wesley, according to the Moravian account, was offended by this, but concealed his displeasure at the time. A story was also circulated to the effect that the Count, seeing how prim the Englishman was, once took him straight from working in the garden to call upon a distinguished family without giving him time to change his

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

clothes. Whatever may have been Wesley's later conclusions upon these incidents—if, indeed, they really happened—at the time he was too much entranced by the apparent happiness of the Moravian settlement to feel other than kindly toward the Germans.

After two weeks with the Count, Wesley continued on his journey to Herrnhut. At Weimar, the friends were detained for some time at the gate, and finally taken before "I know not what great man (I believe the Duke)." The duke inquired where they were going and why: to which Wesley answered that they were going to Herrnhut, "to see the place where the Christians live." The duke looked hard and let them go. At Jena Wesley noted the swords which the students carried, and wondered at the new mile-posts which the elector had set up in his territory. At the gates of Halle they had experience of the King of Prussia's famous guard of tall men. By them the friends were sent about from gate to gate until Wesley sent in a note to Professor Francke, son of one of the most famous of German pietists, August Herman Francke. Francke was not then in the city, but the letter admitted them, and the travelers inspected the Orphan House, one of Francke's outstanding charities.

At Meissen, Wesley was interested in the china-ware made there. He thought it was as finely shaped and colored as any he had ever seen. At church he was astonished at the costliness and gaud-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

iness of the people's clothing. The women wore huge fur caps of the shape of a Turkish turban, with one or more ribands hanging down a great length behind. The minister was adorned with gold and scarlet with a great cross both behind and before. Most of the men kept their hats on, even during prayers, and very few received the Sacrament. The scandalized Englishman could only exclaim, "Alas, Alas! what a *Reformed* country is this!"

At Dresden, the little company was carried from one magistrate to another for two hours before they were allowed to go to their inn. Wesley's indignation explodes in his Journal:

I greatly wonder that common sense and common humanity (for these doubtless subsist in Germany as well as England) do not put an end to this senseless, inhuman usage of strangers which we met with at almost every German city, though more particularly at Frankfort, Weimar, Halle, Leipzig, and Dresden. I know nothing that can reasonably be said in its defence in a time of full peace, being a breach of all the common, even heathen laws of hospitality.

On the first of August Wesley came at last to Herrnhut, about thirty miles from Dresden. Here he remained for eleven days, observing the customs and inquiring into the history and doctrines of the Moravians. His Journal gives short biographies of Christian David and other well-known characters of the Moravian community, and a copy of the constitution of the church. The information is given

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

with few comments, but presents a well-rounded picture of the unusual settlement, which, under Zinzendorf's leadership, had become the center of the most intense missionary activities of the eighteenth century. The Moravians later claimed that, since Wesley understood German imperfectly, he had mistaken many things about Moravian doctrine and life. The material in the Journal, however, gives the impression that, on the whole, Wesley gained a tolerably accurate conception of the community.

On the twelfth of August, he set out on the long journey home. At Halle, he found Professor Francke at home, "who behaved with the utmost humanity." At Jena, Wesley visited the schools for poor children and inquired into their history and methods. Johann Franz Buddeus (1667-1729), whose scientific compendium was later used by Wesley, had been one of the founders of these schools.

The first evening out from Cologne, Wesley met a company of "Switzers" rejoicing on their way to Georgia. He considered them given into his hands by God and "plainly told them what manner of place it was." Having thus delivered his soul, he hastened through Holland, and on September 16 reached London.

Sometime within the next two weeks, Wesley wrote to the church at Herrnhut, frankly expressing his mind concerning them. For some reason the letter was never sent, and this was just as well, since the letter was hardly the kind that is sent to

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

one's hosts immediately after a visit. Wesley had been pleased with many things which he saw, so ran the letter, but he had some doubts and would mention them "in love and meekness." These doubts were set out in sixteen questions, whose burden can be gathered from these examples: "Is not the Count all in all? Are not the rest mere shadows, calling him Rabbi, almost implicitly both believing and obeying him?" "Are you, in general, serious enough?" "Do you not magnify your own church too much?" "Do you not use cunning, guile, or dissimulation in many cases?"

The letter shows that Wesley had been once more disappointed in his search for a community perfectly expressing his ideal of Christianity. Just as America had disillusioned him as to the myth of the "noble savage," so Germany dispelled his hopes of finding in the Moravians the Utopian church. He was being slowly driven toward launching a movement of his own which should propagate the faith as he understood it.

On his return, Wesley began preaching, uniting with a society of persons of like mind which had been organized recently from members of the Church of England. His Journal for September 17, reads:

I began again to declare in my own country the glad tidings of salvation, preaching three times, and afterwards expounding the Holy Scriptures to a large company in the Minories.

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

On Monday I rejoiced to meet with our little society, which now consisted of thirty-two persons. The next day I went to the condemned felons in Newgate, and offered them free salvation. In the evening I went to a society in Bear Yard, and preached repentance and remission of sins. The next evening I spoke the truth in love at a society in Aldersgate Street.

The following weeks were occupied with preaching at various churches in London and with a journey to Oxford on which he read over with great interest the account of the revival in New England under the leadership of Jonathan Edwards. At Oxford he had a remarkable experience which crowds theology off the pages of his Journal.

On Monday night [runs his entry for November 29] I was greatly troubled in dreams; and about eleven o'clock waked in an unaccountable consternation without being able to sleep again. About that time (as I found in the morning) one who had been designed to be my pupil, but was not, came into the Porter's lodge (where several persons were sitting) with a pistol in his hand. He presented this, as if in sport, first to one and then to another. He then attempted twice or thrice to shoot himself, but it would not go off. Upon his laying it down one took it up, and blew out the priming. He was very angry, went and got fresh prime, came in again, sat down, beat the flint with his key, and about twelve, pulling off his hat and wig, said he would die like a gentleman, and shot himself through the head.

There was some discussion of Charles returning to residence at Oxford. Charles demurred at this, but there were no settled plans for either brother as yet. They were preaching wherever they had oppor-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

tunity, but opportunities were rapidly diminishing; for by the end of 1738, most London churches had closed against them because of their enthusiastic preaching of the doctrine of mystical conversion. This preaching not only shocked easy-going churchmen but also many earnest men incapable by temperament or training of mystical experiences.

Very soon after his return from Germany, John accompanied Charles in a call upon the Bishop of London, Edmund Gibson, the greatest church lawyer in England. Strangely enough, they discussed first whether those who had been baptized by dissenters should be required to be rebaptized before admission into the Church of England, and on this subject the Whig bishop took a more liberal view than the Methodists. The brothers then pressed him to decide whether religious societies were illegal. The shrewd bishop refused to commit himself, advising them to read the Acts for themselves, but promising to receive no accusation against them unless presented by two or three witnesses, as the law required.

While Wesley was in London, meeting with such religious societies as were hospitable, and uncertain as to his next step, he was suddenly confronted with an invitation to take part in an irregular, but highly promising religious enterprise begun by the meteoric Whitefield. The latter had returned in December, 1738, intent upon being ordained for further service in America and upon taking collec-

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

tions for various projects he had in mind for the colonies. When he had left England a year before, just as John Wesley returned, he had been the most popular preacher in London; but he returned to find his reputation much damaged. In his absence, his voyage journals had been printed and had aroused unfavorable comment, for Whitefield was given to loose expressions signifying that he had been specially favored of the Almighty. Upon his return, therefore, Whitefield began preaching in the face of criticism; and the opposition came to a climax when there was a misunderstanding about an invitation to preach in St. Margaret's, Westminster, and the newspapers unfairly reported the incident as a disgraceful brawl. Whitefield departed shortly after this for the west of England.

At Bath Whitefield asked for the use of the abbey and was refused. At Bristol, the rector of St. Mary's, Redcliffe, also declined to open his pulpit to the young minister of Savannah. Shut out from the churches, Whitefield began to preach at the gaol by favor of the keeper, Dagge, later immortalized by Dr. Johnson for humane treatment of the poet Savage. Not content with this, the evangelist began speaking in the fields to the miners of Kingswood. Thus, almost accidentally, began the field-preaching which was to characterize the Methodists for a half century.

Whitefield continued until he felt that he must return to America, and, on March 22, he wrote Wes-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

ley to come to Bristol and continue the work there. The seriousness with which Wesley took this proposal is hard to understand at this distance. The modern reader can not appreciate the feeling of abhorrence with which the eighteenth century looked upon so innocent a proceeding as preaching in the fields. But for Wesley, to go to Bristol and identify himself with Whitefield's erratic methods was something which he could not do without evidence of divine approval. His Journal entries show the way in which he went about determining the sentiments of the Deity.

The first method was that of opening the Bible and taking as an expression of the will of God either the verse at the top of the page or the one on which the eye fell. The results of the first trials were discouraging enough. "Get thee up into this mountain . . ." read the first, "and die in the mount whither thou goest up, and be gathered unto thy people." The others were not much better: "And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days." "I will show him how great things he must suffer for My name's sake." "And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him."

Since the oracles were unpropitious, the religious society in Fetter Lane was consulted. They could come to no decision and resorted to lot. The lot was favorable to his departure. Having learned this much, some were curious to know how the adven-

PILGRIM'S PROGRESS ✓

ture would result; resorting to Scripture they obtained the following cryptic verses: "Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker." "When wicked men have slain a righteous person in his own house upon his bed: shall I not require his blood at your hands, and take you away from the earth?" "And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and they buried him in the city, even in Jerusalem."

The one whom these oracles most concerned seems not to have questioned who was David and who was Saul or who was the righteous man slain upon his bed, but, leaving Ahaz sleeping with his fathers, on March 29, 1739, Wesley set out for Bristol.

12-11-20

CHAPTER V

THE LORD'S CAVALRY

BRISTOL, to which John Wesley came in the spring of 1739, was, as Daniel Defoe had said, "the greatest, the richest, and the best Point of Trade in Great Britain, London only excepted." This importance was due in the main to trade with America and the West Indies, a trade which determined largely the character of the city. Seafaring men returning from long cruises did not add to the moral tone of the community; a few years later, Bristol was said to have had ale-houses in the proportion of one to each ten houses in the city. Slave-ships sailed regularly from the harbor, and many privateers were outfitted there. Near the city was the mining community of Kingswood, where Whitefield had begun preaching in the fields.

On the evening of March 31, Wesley arrived in Bristol and met Whitefield.

I could scarce reconcile myself [wrote Wesley] to this strange way of preaching in the fields, of which he set me an example on Sunday; having been all my life (till very lately) so tenacious of every point relating to decency and order, that I should have thought the saving of souls almost a sin if it had not been done in a church.

THE LORD'S CAVALRY

The eighteenth century had a hard struggle to overcome its repugnance to unadorned Nature. In the middle of the century men saw nothing "romantic" in the spectacle of a clergyman performing his duties with the sky for his canopy and a mound for his pulpit. A man who, like Wesley, loved the decency and order of Anglican worship and preferred what was "neat" and "nice" instinctively turned away also from the noisy mobs which attended preaching in the fields. But Whitefield's example prevailed.

On Monday, April 2, 1739, Wesley took the decisive step which freed him from dependence upon favors of the clergy—bishops and priests alike. "At four in the afternoon," runs the record of that day, "I submitted to be more vile, and proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation, speaking from a little eminence in a ground adjoining the city to about three thousand people."

The preaching of Wesley and his friends, which was to raise such a furor in England, merits some description. Whitefield, the innovator in the matter of field-preaching, was at this time twenty-five years old. He had begun to lose the graceful figure of youth and was assuming that corpulency which is so evident in his pictures. He had a squint in one eye, the effect of measles, which earned him the title, "Dr. Squintum." In preaching, he was emotional and dramatic. Lecky has given a classic description of Whitefield as a preacher.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

His preaching [wrote the historian] combined almost the highest perfection of acting with the most burning fervour of conviction. No man ever exhibited more wonderfully the strange power which great histrionic talent exercises over the human mind—investing words which are in truth the emptiest bombast with all the glow of the most majestic eloquence, and imparting, for the moment at least, to confident assertions more than the weight of the most convincing arguments. His gestures were faultless in their beauty and propriety, while his voice was so powerful that Franklin, who was the most accurate of men, ascertained by experiment that it could be heard distinctly in the open air by 30,000 persons. . . . Garrick is reported to have said, with a pardonable exaggeration, that Whitefield could pronounce the word Mesopotamia in such a way as to move an audience to tears.

Garrick was much impressed with Whitefield's histrionic ability. "I would give a hundred guineas," he is said to have remarked, "if I could only say 'Oh!' like Mr. Whitefield." Dr. Johnson thought that Whitefield substituted "familiarity and noise" for "knowledge, art and elegance"; but popular opinion did not agree with the Oracle. Benjamin Franklin, who printed some of Whitefield's works, has a well-known passage attesting the evangelist's powers of persuasion. The Philadelphian had no interest in an orphan house in Georgia and advised Whitefield to move it to Pennsylvania. When Whitefield refused, Franklin declined to contribute. A little while after, Franklin went to hear the preacher.

THE LORD'S CAVALRY

I silently resolved [said Franklin] he should get nothing from me. I had, in my pocket, a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded, I began to soften, and concluded to give the copper: another stroke of his oratory determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably that I emptied my pocket into the collector's dish, gold and all. At this sermon, there was also one of our club, who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, emptied his pockets before he came from home. Towards the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong inclination to give, and applied to a neighbor, who stood near him, to lend him money for the purpose. The request was fortunately made to, perhaps, the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was, "At any other time, friend Hopkinson, I would lend thee freely, but not now, for thee seems to me to be out of thy right senses."

Even the fastidious Chesterfield could be moved by the impassioned preaching of the evangelist. Once, listening to Whitefield's description of a blind beggar tottering on the edge of a precipice, the arbiter of fashion, forgetting where he was, cried out, "Good God! he's gone!"

Such lively testimony may now be supplemented by the observations of a methodical and able mind disposed to fair judgments. Lord Egmont heard Whitefield preach on June 8, 1739, before his departure for America. Egmont sat in his summer house with some guests invited "to partake of the curiosity" and listened to Whitefield preaching to

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

about two hundred people assembled on the common.

The multitude, about 200, being assembled, he began with the hundredth psalm, which numbers joined in. Then he made a long pathetic prayer, and lastly, began his sermon with a clear and audible voice. The subject of it was the necessity of the being born again, or the new birth, which he said our present divines neglect to teach, and even oppose from arguments of human reason, looking upon those who hold it, and on himself in particular, as a madman, an enthusiast and the like, whereas it is the doctrine of the Church of England expressed in her thirty-nine articles, prayers and collects, and literally asserted in the Holy Scriptures . . . That by the sin of Adam we were all under sin, and must have been damned but for the free and gracious sufferings of Jesus Christ; but though this be our condition, yet everybody that pleases may obtain this free grace by praying for it. It is therefore by faith in Christ alone that we are saved, not by our works, for being dead in sin we could do none; but without good works we may assure ourselves that we have not that faith; for they necessarily go together. He pressed the belief of the Holy Trinity, and in the course of his sermon showed himself a firm Church of England man. He preached by heart with much earnestness, and spreading his arms wide, and was at no loss for matter of words, and the people were very attentive.

This pedestrian account is supplemented by two pages of impressions gained from extended questioning of the preacher after the sermon. The diarist summed up his impressions with this pronouncement:

THE LORD'S CAVALRY

This is the main of my conversation with him, by which I only find an enthusiastic notion of his being capable of doing much good, and perhaps he thinks he is raised up for that purpose; for the rest, I believe him perfectly sincere and disinterested, and that he does indeed work a considerable reformation among the common people, and there is nothing in his doctrine that can be laid hold on to his hurt.

There was the greatest contrast between the preaching of Whitefield and that of Wesley. John Hampson, who had been closely associated with Wesley, compared his style to "the calm, equal flow of a placid stream, gliding gently within its banks, without the least ruffle or agitation upon its surface," while Whitefield "alternately thundered and lightened upon his audience." The same hand wrote a discriminating criticism of Wesley as a preacher:

His attitude in the pulpit was graceful and easy; his action calm and natural, yet pleasing and expressive; his voice not loud, but clear and manly; his style neat, simple, perspicuous: and admirably adapted to the capacity of his hearers.

His discourses, in point of composition, were extremely different, on different occasions. When he gave himself sufficient time for study, he succeeded; and when he did not, he frequently failed. A clear proof, that the employments, in which he was engaged, were too numerous, and the economy, to which he gave himself up, too tedious and minute, for a man who generally appeared in the pulpit twice or thrice a-day. We have frequently heard him, when he was excellent, acute and ingenious in his observations, accurate in his descriptions, and clear and pointed in his expositions. Not seldom however have we found him the reverse. . . .

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Many have remarked, that when he fell into anecdote and story-telling, which was not seldom, his discourses were little to the purpose. The remark is true. We have scarcely ever heard from him a tolerable sermon, in which a story was introduced.

Wesley was not incapable of emotion in his preaching, and his quiet manner was often enlivened. Horace Walpole once heard him, thought him as "manifest an actor" as Garrick, and deplored the fact that "toward the end, he exalted his voice, and acted very ugly enthusiasm." Wesley's voice, while not capable of the tonal effects which were a part of Whitefield's stock in trade, was nevertheless noted for its carrying quality. By actual test it was found that he could be heard one hundred and forty yards.

The strength of Wesley's preaching seems to have been in the simplicity of his message, which was delivered with piercing directness. As a young preacher he had noticed that his congregation did not understand his sermons, and he asked an intelligent serving-maid to hear him read a sermon and to stop him at every word she did not understand. Her "Stop, sir" came annoyingly often, but every time Wesley resolutely substituted an easy word for a hard one. His models of style were the Epistles of St. John. When John Nelson, later a Methodist preacher, heard Wesley for the first time he thought that the preacher spoke to none but him and durst not look up, thinking that all the people were looking at him. Martin Madan, cousin

THE LORD'S CAVALRY

of the poet Cowper and a man of fortune, was a member of the Hell Fire Club, a company of reckless spirits who urged Madan to hear Wesley and imitate his preaching for their entertainment. Madan went to Wesley's chapel, and as he entered the door Wesley announced his text, "Prepare to meet thy God." The roisterer heard the sermon and returned to his companions. When asked if he had "taken off" the preacher, he answered quietly that the preacher "had taken him off." A little while afterward, Madan became an evangelical preacher.

In his preaching Wesley knew how to turn circumstances to his advantage. Once in a Welsh churchyard a passing-bell was tolling as he spoke, and he took up the words, "It is appointed unto man once to die." At Kingswood, he preached under a sycamore-tree during a violent rain-storm. His text was: "As the rain cometh down . . . from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud . . . so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth. . . ."

The spectacle of a clergyman in full canonicals preaching from a table in the street or from a mound on the common was so unusual in eighteenth-century England as to attract a crowd anywhere. To hear there or in the improvised meeting-houses which were rented or built during the first years of the movement language which could be understood by miners and drudges was equally as rare a thing. There were many learned and pious men in the priest-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

hood of the Church of England, but most of them were content to fight infidelity in ponderous volumes which demolished their opponent's arguments, but were never read. The reader of eighteenth-century sermons or theological works does not wonder that the Wesleys and Whitefield had crowds to hear them wherever they went.

Preaching alone does not explain the Methodist meetings; the singing there was of a kind unheard before in England. Until 1737 there was no hymn-book intended for use in Church of England services.¹ Psalms were drawled out in the congregation, the tune set by a clerk whose sniveling voice often neutralized such little effect as feeble metrical versions might have had. The new Methodist movement was a singing movement. Charles Wesley, in the course of his life, wrote some six thousand hymns. If they were not all poetry, they were singable. Such rhymes as the following set miners and drudges singing in spite of themselves:

O Jesus the Rest
Of Spirits distrest,
Receive a Lost Sinner that flies to thy Breast!
Long lost on a Sea
Of Trouble, I flee
To find an Asylum, and Pardon in Thee.

¹ In this year John Wesley published his Charlestown hymn-book. Ten years before, a collection of hymns had been published by a churchman, but with the statement that they were not designed for use in the church services.

THE LORD'S CAVALRY

If many of the songs were pure doggerel, others, such as "Love divine, all love excelling" and "Jesus, Lover of my soul," have been sung all over the world. But the people who came to Methodist meetings were not literary critics; they wanted words they could sing to lively tunes, and lively ones they had. Sober churchmen heard with horror the tunes written by Charles Wesley, who did not scruple even to set words to popular strains, as he once did with a music-hall ditty, "Nancy Dawson."

When Whitefield left for America in August, 1739, John and Charles were both committed to itinerant preaching after the fashion which Whitefield had set. For the next two or three years they preached in the west and south of England and in Wales, with headquarters at London and Bristol. During the first months, John's preaching was attended with singular phenomena. These ranged from instances of mass hysteria to what seem to have been cases of dissociated personality. Two excerpts from the Journal will suffice.

For May 1, 1739 occurs this entry:

... at Baldwin Street [Bristol] my voice could scarce be heard amidst the groanings of some and the cries of others, calling aloud to Him that is "mighty to save". . . .

A Quaker, who stood by, was not a little displeased at the dissimulation of those creatures, and was biting his lips and knitting his brows, when he dropped down as thunderstruck. The agony he was in was even terrible to behold. We be-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

sought God not to lay folly to his charge. And he soon lifted up his head, and cried aloud, "Now I know thou art a prophet of the Lord."

On October 25 of the same year, Wesley was sent for to see a woman who had been taken ill the evening before.

She lay on the ground furiously gnashing her teeth, and after a while roared aloud. It was not easy for three or four persons to hold her, especially when the name of Jesus was named. We prayed; the violence of her symptoms ceased, though without a complete deliverance. . . . [The next day] she began screaming before I came into the room; then broke out into a horrid laughter, mixed with blasphemy, grievous to hear. One who from many circumstances apprehended a preternatural agent to be concerned in this, asking, "How didst thou dare to enter into a Christian?" was answered, "She is not a Christian. She is mine." Q. "Dost thou not tremble at the name of Jesus?" No words followed, but she shrunk back and trembled exceedingly. Q. "Art thou not increasing thy own damnation?" It was faintly answered, "Aye, aye"; which was followed by fresh cursing and blaspheming.

My brother coming in, she cried out, "Preacher! Field-preacher! I don't love field-preaching." This was repeated two hours together, with spitting, and all the expressions of strong aversion.

We left her at twelve, but called again about noon on Friday, the 26th. And now it was that God showed He heareth the prayer. All her pangs ceased in a moment; she was filled with peace, and knew that the son of wickedness was departed from her.

THE LORD'S CAVALRY

George Whitefield preached with more eloquence and tears than John Wesley, yet such outbursts did not occur under his preaching nor did he approve of them. Charles Wesley, the poet, was also a passionate preacher, but he not only discouraged such scenes, but effectively prevented them. At Newcastle, in 1743, he adopted a simple preventive. "The first night I preached here," he wrote in his "Journal," "half my words were lost through their outcries. Last night, before I began, I gave public notice that whosoever cried, so as to drown my voice, should be carried to the farthest corner of the room. But my porters had no employment the whole night; yet the Lord was with us, mightily convincing of sin and righteousness. I am more and more convinced, the fits were a device of Satan to stop the course of the gospel. Some very unstill sisters, who always took care to stand near me, and tried which should cry loudest, since I had them removed out of my sight, have been as quiet as lambs."

As might be expected, Samuel Wesley had little patience with such occurrences and carried on a sharp correspondence with his brother concerning them. "Did these agitations," he asked, "ever begin during the use of any collects of the Church? or during the preaching of any sermon that had before been preached within consecrated walls without effect, or during the inculcating any other doctrine besides that of your new birth?"

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

John Wesley's own conclusions regarding the hysteria which was a product mainly of his preaching were characteristic. He gathered his material in logical fashion and passed upon it with a curious blend of practical insight and theological bias.

In March, 1743, he wrote:

I concluded my second course of visiting, in which I inquired particularly into two things: (1) the case of those who had almost every night the last week cried out aloud during the preaching. . . . As to the former I found:

1. That all of them (I think, not one excepted) were persons in perfect health; and had not been subject to fits of any kind, till they were thus affected.

2. That this had come upon every one of them in a moment, without any previous notice, while they were either hearing the word of God or thinking on what they had heard.

3. That in that moment they dropped down, lost all their strength, and were seized with violent pain.

This they expressed in different manners. Some said they felt just as if a sword was running through them; others, that they thought a great weight lay upon them, as if it would squeeze them into the earth. Some said that they were quite choked, so that they could not breathe; others, that their hearts swelled ready to burst; and others that it was as if their heart, as if inside, as if their whole body, was tearing all to pieces.

These symptoms I can no more impute to any natural cause than to the Spirit of God. I can make no doubt that it was Satan tearing them, as they were coming to Christ. And hence proceeded those grievous cries, whereby he might

THE LORD'S CAVALRY

design both to discredit the work of God and to affright fearful people from hearing that word whereby their souls might be saved.

In a tract published in 1745, Wesley was willing to admit that the extraordinary scenes which accompanied his early ministry in Bristol could be explained either "on principles of reason or Scripture." He would not give up his supernatural explanation, but maturer judgment added to it a "natural" one:

For, how easy is it to suppose, that a strong, lively and sudden apprehension of the heinousness of sin, the wrath of God, and the bitter pains of eternal death, should affect the body as well as the soul, during the present laws of vital union, should interrupt or disturb the ordinary circulation, and put nature out of its course! Yea, we may question, whether, while this union subsists, it be possible for the mind to be affected, in so violent a degree, without some or other of those bodily symptoms following.

These phenomena belong to the first period of Methodism. They rarely occurred after 1739 under the preaching of the leaders of the movement and rarely then outside of Bristol.

As the manner of their work was without precedent for that century, so the conditions under which the Methodist preached called for unusual methods. The field-preacher had to depend upon his wits to defend himself against disturbers and hecklers who felt free to break in upon meetings held out-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

side of consecrated walls. Wesley's first visit to Bath, the fashionable watering-place of the period, was marked by an encounter with Beau Nash, social arbiter of the city. Nash had boasted of his intention to prevent the evangelist preaching, and, as a result, a large crowd was on hand, including "many of the rich and great." Wesley preached in the plain fashion which he always adopted when speaking to the rich, and with some effect. His own account continues:

Many of them seemed to be a little surprised, and were sinking apace into seriousness, when their champion appeared, and, coming close to me, asked by what authority I did these things. I replied, "By the authority of Jesus Christ, conveyed to me by the (now) Archbishop of Canterbury, when he laid hands upon me, and said, 'Take thou authority to preach the gospel.'" He said, "This is contrary to Act of Parliament: this is a conventicle." I answered, "Sir, the conventicles mentioned in that Act (as the preamble shows) are seditious meetings; but this is not such; here is no shadow of sedition; therefore it is not contrary to that Act." He replied, "I say it is; and, besides, your preaching frightens people out of their wits." "Sir, did you ever hear me preach?" "No." "How, then, can you judge of what you never heard?" "Sir, by common report." "Common report is not enough. Give me leave, sir, to ask, is not your name Nash?" "My name is Nash." "Sir, I dare not judge of you by common report: I think it is not enough to judge by." Here he paused awhile, and, having recovered himself, said, "I desire to know what this people comes here for"; on which one replied, "Sir, leave him to me; let an old woman answer him. You, Mr. Nash, take care of your body; we take care of

THE LORD'S CAVALRY

our souls: and for the food of our souls we come here." He replied not a word, but walked away.

Wesley's public preaching was supplemented by personal interviews carried on with friends or chance companions. In June, 1741, he tells of an experiment which illustrates what must have been his common practice:

For these two days I had made an experiment which I had been so often and earnestly pressed to do; speaking to none concerning the things of God, unless my heart was free to it. And what was the event? Why, (1) That I spoke to none at all for four-score miles together; no, not even to him that traveled with me in the chaise, unless a few words at first setting out. (2) That I had no cross either to bear or to take up, and commonly in an hour or two fell fast asleep. (3) That I had much respect shown me wherever I came; every one behaving to me as to a civil, good-natured gentleman. Oh how pleasing is all this to flesh and blood? Need ye "compass sea and land" to make "proselytes" to this?

Sometimes Wesley's success in a personal interview was due to other causes than his logic.

I overtook a serious man [May, 1742] with whom I immediately fell into conversation. He presently gave me to know what his opinions were; therefore I said nothing to contradict them. But that did not content him; he was quite uneasy to know whether I held the doctrine of the decrees as he did; but I told him over and over, "We had better keep to practical things, lest we should be angry at one another." And so we did for two miles, till he caught me unawares and dragged me into the dispute before I knew where I was. He

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

then grew warmer and warmer; told me I was rotten at heart, and supposed I was one of John Wesley's followers. I told him "No, I am John Wesley himself." Upon which—

Improvisum aspris veluti qui sentibus anguem pressit—
he would gladly have run away outright. But, being the better mounted of the two, I kept close to his side, and endeavoured to show him his heart, till we came into the street of Northampton.

The work could be no longer confined to London and Bristol. In May, 1742, Wesley was called north to attend a dying friend and decided to take this opportunity to go as far as Newcastle-upon-Tyne, where he had been repeatedly urged to come in order that he might preach to the colliers there as he had preached to the colliers at Kingswood, near Bristol. At seven in the morning, Sunday, May 30, 1742, Wesley walked down into the "poorest and most contemptible part" of Newcastle, and with a friend began to sing the hundredth psalm. He preached to the crowd that gathered and announced at the end of the sermon: "If you desire to know who I am, my name is John Wesley. At five in the evening, with God's help, I design to preach here again." Thus began Wesley's work in the apex of that triangle which was to circumscribe the major portion of his activity for the next half-century, a triangle of which the points were: London, Bristol, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

The journeyings which now began were to continue for the rest of the great itinerant's life. Al-

THE LORD'S CAVALRY

though mainly in the regions defined by his three headquarters, they were by no means limited to this territory; Scotland, Ireland and Wales were also parts of the Methodist parish over which Wesley had assumed personal supervision. The record of almost any year during his active ministry may be chosen as illustration of the extent of his labors. In January, 1747, for example, Wesley was in Bristol; in February he visited Lincolnshire; during March, April, and May he traveled in Yorkshire and the Midlands; London, Bristol, and Plymouth occupied his attention in June; July he spent in Cornwall; in August he journeyed through Wales to Ireland, returning to Wales in September; and he concluded his year's work in and around London. In such manner he traveled four or five thousand miles a year. Several times he accomplished what was then almost incredible distances in a day's journey—seventy or eighty miles; at least once he went as far as ninety miles in twenty hours.

At least until 1773, that is until he was seventy, Wesley rode almost altogether on horseback. Turnpikes had not been built in northern England, and there were but few anywhere. Roads were unspeakably bad, and streams were often dangerous for the crude ferries. In October, 1743, Wesley crossed the Trent. His plain record speaks eloquently of the dangers of eighteenth-century travel:

... at Ferry we were at full stop, the boatmen telling us we could not pass the Trent; it was as much as our lives were

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

worth to put from shore before the storm abated. We waited an hour; but, being afraid it would do much hurt if I should disappoint the congregation at Grimsby, I asked the men if they did not think it possible to get to the other shore. They said they could not tell; but if we would venture our lives they would venture theirs. So we put off, having six men, two women, and three horses in the boat. Many stood looking after us on the river-side, in the middle of which we were, when, in an instant, the side of the boat was under water, and the horses and men rolling one over another. We expected the boat to sink every moment; but I did not doubt of being able to swim ashore. The boatmen were amazed, as well as the rest; but they quickly recovered and rowed for life. And soon after, our horses leaping over-board lightened the boat, and we all came unhurt to land.

A note from a later date will be further illustration of the discomforts of the itinerant. In February, 1747, Wesley was traveling in Lincolnshire.

I was wondering, the day before, at the mildness of the weather, such as seldom attends me on my journeys. But my wonder now ceased; the wind was turned full north, and blew so exceeding hard and keen that when we came to Hatfield neither my companions nor I had much use of our hands or feet. After resting an hour, we bore up again, through the wind and snow, which drove full in our faces. But this was only a squall. In Baldock Field the storm began in earnest. The large hail drove so vehemently in our faces that we could not see, nor hardly breathe. . . . About six I preached to a serious congregation.

On the next morning, the servant told Wesley that there could be no traveling that day, as the roads were filled with snow. Wesley replied: "At least

THE LORD'S CAVALRY

we can walk twenty miles a day, with our horses in our hands."

To the physical labor of travel must be added Wesley's exertions in preaching. Again one can turn at random to the Journal for the formidable record of his activities. On Sunday, December 2, 1742, he preached at five and at eight in the morning at Newcastle; he then walked seven miles to Tanfield Lea, and after preaching there returned to preach at Newcastle again at four. But preaching three, four, or five times a day was not merely a Sunday exercise. During the week of April 20, 1747, for example, Wesley preached fifteen times in thirteen different places. In fifty years, he is supposed to have preached forty thousand sermons.

Year after year Wesley persisted in these labors, lured oftentimes by the news of some village where he had not preached. In his Journal appear many such entries as the following: "Having been informed there were many large collieries three or four miles north or north-west from Durham, I rode to a village called Renton, in the midst of them, and proclaimed 'The Lord God, gracious and merciful.' " Or again: "I had had for some time a great desire to go and publish the love of God our Saviour, if it were but for one day, in the Isles of Scilly. . . . So John Nelson, Mr. Shepherd, and I, with three men and a pilot, sailed from St. Ives." But wherever Wesley preached once there he tried to return, to inspire his societies, to receive new mem-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

bers, to restore the erring, and to expel the recalcitrant. During the '40's Charles traveled almost as constantly as John, but it was John who continued, decade after decade, in the endless visitation and revisititation. So unceasingly, indeed, did John go about his work, that, before the end of the first ten years of his ministry, there were few towns or villages from Tyne to Land's End, from the Welsh mountains to London, which were not accustomed to the sight of a trim clergyman who rode quietly through their streets and who raised his clear voice in the church-yard or at the market-cross.

CHAPTER VI

CONTRA MUNDUM

OPPOSITION to the new religious movement was inevitable. Both the conditions of the country and the character of the Methodist revival made opposition certain. The invasion of Methodist preachers was resented by high and low alike; but while the bishops replied with quartos, the mob resorted to clubs and stones. The whole story throws a flood of light on social and intellectual conditions in the middle of the century.

England, in the 1740's, was yet an island of isolated communities. The period of road-building had not yet begun, and newspapers were but rarely circulated beyond the city in which they were published. Dwellers in one part of England were "foreigners" to those living in another part. Dialects, which even to-day are easily distinguished, were then real barriers between communities. As a consequence, communication between different parts of England was rare. In 1753, no stage-coach left Liverpool for any other town than London, and that journey occupied four days. Not until 1774 was service between Liverpool and Manchester insti-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

tuted, and then only for three times a week. One historian declares that in London itself the inhabitants who lived west of Temple Bar differed as much from those who lived on the Essex side of the City as they now do from the peasants of Brittany or the western Pyrenees.

So, too, the parish priest, who by the social organization of the time was an integral part of the governmental as well as the religious system, was removed, as were his people, from the broader national currents of thought and interest. Only exceptional men like Samuel Wesley retained in secluded parishes active occupation with national policies of the church; and after the discontinuance of Convocation, in 1722, even their participation was impossible. The parish priest was undisturbed by other than local controversies, "and did not vex himself if the Bishops were Arians or Deists. He saw very little of Bishops: he did not know them; and they thought it sufficient if they knew a Duke." Removed from outside interests the local ministry was keenly sensitive to its preëminence in the parish, and did not easily brook invasion of its established rights.

The essence of English piety in the eighteenth century was decency and moderation; and in nothing more than in religion did the pious Englishman ask for privacy, for the home was the center of religious life. If in church he paid due respects to religion "as by law established," it was in his own home that he was expected to be the dutiful husband, loving

CONTRA MUNDUM

father, and loyal son of the church which his tomb-stone would celebrate.

For an understanding of the Englishman's mind in the 1740's, one must remember also that this was a particularly nervous decade. Fear of invasion by the French and of an uprising in favor of the Pretender gave the Government many a bad night. In 1745 the uprising actually came, but the excitement caused by it was out of all proportion to the real danger. The slightest suspicious action rendered one liable to arrest. Charles Wesley was once arrested on the charge of having prayed for the Pretender. When he was arraigned, he discovered that the only evidence against him was that he had been heard to pray that the Lord "would call home his banished." He explained that he was using figurative language, praying that those who were pilgrims and strangers in the earth might be at home in heaven, and was released.

An uprising of Roman Catholics was especially dreaded, since their cause was supposed to be that of the Pretender, then domiciled in Rome. Popular opinion in the eighteenth century may be inferred from the exclamation of Mrs. Sullen in Farquhar's play, who, when she discovered that she had been robbed, aroused the house with cries of "Thieves! Murther! Popery!"

In such conditions the Methodists began to preach. Unrelated to the ordered machinery of the Establishment, they went into parishes without leave

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

of any one. The Wesleys and Whitefield—and later some others—were priests of the Church of England, but their actions raised grave ecclesiastical questions. In 1742 Wesley went to Epworth and, remaining over Sunday, called on the curate, offering to assist either by preaching or reading prayers. The curate declined the offer and preached a sermon in which he descended “in a very florid and oratorical manner” against religious “enthusiasm.” At the conclusion of the service, one of Wesley’s friends announced at the church door that “Mr. Wesley, not being permitted to preach in the church, designs to preach here at six o’clock.” Wesley’s own description of his service is a Methodist classic: “Accordingly at six I came, and found such a congregation as I believe Epworth never saw before. I stood near the east end of the church, upon my father’s tombstone, and cried, ‘The kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.’”

This is justly considered an epochal scene in Methodist history. Wesley had before this broken parish boundaries and invaded other men’s spiritual territory, but this scene gripped popular imagination and became the symbol of Wesley’s motto, “The world is my parish.” His right thus to disregard the authority of a legally appointed ecclesiastic in his own parish was justified by Wesley both by ingenious interpretation of canon law and on the grounds of expediency. In August, 1739, he had an interview

CONTRA MUNDUM

with the famous Joseph Butler, Bishop of Bristol. To Wesley's explanation of his work the bishop dryly replied: "Very extraordinary indeed! Well, sir, since you ask my advice, I will give it to you very freely. You have no business here; you are not commissioned to preach in this diocese. Therefore I advise you to go hence." Wesley argued that he was a priest of the Church Universal, and, being ordained as fellow of a college, he was not limited to any particular cure. "My lord," he said, "my business on earth is to do what good I can. Wherever, therefore, I think I can do most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so. At present, I think I can do most good here; therefore here I stay."

Thus Wesley defied the Church of England in the name of the Church of England. To churchmen not troubled as Wesley was by the haunting sense of a mission to be fulfilled and a gospel to preach, such conduct was destructive of all law and order. Less than three weeks before his death, John's elder brother, torn by the distress of a loyal Churchman, wrote from Tiverton to his mother:

It was with exceeding concern and grief, I heard you had countenanced a spreading delusion, so far as to be one of Jack's congregation. Is it not enough that I am bereft of both my brothers, but must my mother follow too? . . . They design separation. They are already forbidden all the pulpits in London; and to preach in that diocese is actual schism. In all likelihood, it will come to the same all over

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

England, if the bishops have courage enough. . . . As I told Jack, I am not afraid the Church should excommunicate him (discipline is at too low an ebb), but that he should excommunicate the Church.

In Wesley's own connection he took good care that none of his preachers should interpret the motto, "The world is my parish," as authority to go where they were not authorized; and in the Methodist Church to-day there is no greater ecclesiastical offense than that of disregarding another minister's parish rights. But in the meantime, Wesley followed in the footsteps of all great reformers who have dared to break institutions in the name of the higher authority of an inner compulsion.

This invasion of parishes despite the wishes of the incumbent was especially offensive owing to the manner and message of the itinerant preacher. As Lecky put it:

The Methodist preacher came to an Anglican parish in the spirit, and with the language, of a missionary going to the most ignorant heathens; and asked the clergyman of the parish to lend him his pulpit, in order that he might instruct the parishioners—perhaps for the first time—in the true gospel of Christ.

And the manner of this instruction and the results of it were all against the grain of traditional English piety. A religion which implied mingling with the mob or exposing one's religious sentiments in public was as revolting as would have been the

CONTRA MUNDUM

thought of exposing one's household privacy in the market-square. The society meetings upon which Wesley laid so much stress, the love-feasts and public testimonies, as well as extravagant emotional scenes, were repugnant alike to the minister and to the respectable part of his congregation. Besides, many of the helpers were crude in their speech, offending sensitive ears by voice and manner. For all these things Wesley cared nothing at all, and cried out that the churches were not Christian because they could not distinguish between social exclusiveness, English reserve, and religion. In retaliation the clergy locked their doors, and the gentry, with those who wanted to be taken for gentry, tried not to smile when they heard that the mob had attacked a Methodist preacher.

At first thought, the Methodists would seem to be the last people to be suspected as "papists"; but this was a common charge. The High-churchmanship of the Oxford Club and the complaints of the Georgians against Wesley's rigorousness in enforcing the canons which more prudent Churchmen had allowed to fall into desuetude help to explain the suspicion. But Wesley also showed a more tolerant spirit toward the Catholics than did his contemporaries, and the loose talk of the Methodists about dreams and visions reminded men of similar claims made by medieval monks, and they hastened to draw the parallel. The bishop of Exeter wrote a ponderous volume on "The Enthusiasm of Methodists and Papists

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Compared"; Hogarth drew a cartoon of a Methodist preacher with the shaven crown of a friar under his wig; and Horace Walpole voiced a general suspicion when he "apprehended" that "the Methodists are secret Papists."

Other causes of opposition must be recognized. The puritanic character of the Methodists and their doctrines made them unpopular with many. The tavern-keeper was at one with the actor and the beau in disliking Wesley and his followers. The fox-hunting, hard-drinking country parson would not look with favor upon a brother priest who referred publicly to "soul-damning clergymen." The village loafer and the squire alike would squirm at the liberal promises of fire and brimstone which were voiced at the market-cross in a day when hell was not as yet explained away. To the upper classes, Wesley was particularly irritating, for his diatribes could not be ignored by a tolerant audience willing to patronize a popular preacher. Wesley would not be patronized. His consciousness of being well born and fellow of a college prevented his accepting the condescensions of people of his own class.¹ As a result, denunciations of the rich and great which were but part of the sauce for polite companies meeting in the Countess of Huntingdon's parlors to hear

¹ "John Wesley, the gentleman, had a peculiar dislike for the fashionable world, in which Whitefield, the pot-boy, was peculiarly happy." A. J. Mason, "John Wesley, A Lecture" (The Church Historical Society Publications, XLVI), London, 1908, p. 34.

CONTRA MUNDUM

Whitefield became personal insults when spoken by Wesley. His puritanism could not be excused; it was a betrayal of his class.

Opposition to Methodism took many forms. Several hundred anti-Methodist publications of the time are in one collection in America. Besides the publications of the clergy, there were more or less extended references by playwrights and novelists who hoped to get a laugh at the expense of the disliked Methodists. Samuel Foote was especially prolific in this regard, no less than nine of his plays making mention of the Methodists; one, "The Minor," contained extended ridicule. As early as 1743 Wesley was in Newcastle when a play called "Trick upon Trick, or Methodism Displayed" was advertised. In his Journal, Wesley gave details of the performance, evidently relishing the outcome.

On Friday a vast multitude of spectators were assembled in the Moot Hall to see this. It was believed there could not be less than fifteen hundred people, some hundreds of whom sat on rows of seats built upon the stage. Soon after the comedians had begun the first act of the play, on a sudden all those seats fell down at once, the supporters of them breaking like a rotten stick. The people were thrown one upon another, about five foot forward, but not one of them hurt. After a short time the rest of the spectators were quiet, and the actors went on. In the middle of the second act all the shilling seats gave a crack and sunk several inches down. A great noise and shrieking followed; and as many as could readily get to the door went out and returned no more. Notwithstanding this, when the noise was over, the actors went

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

on with the play. In the beginning of the third act the entire stage suddenly sunk about six inches. The players retired with great precipitation; yet in a while they began again. At the latter end of the third act all the six-penny seats, without any kind of notice, fell to the ground. There was now a cry on every side, it being supposed that many were crushed in pieces; but, upon inquiry, not a single person (such was the mercy of God!) was either killed or dangerously hurt. Two or three hundred remaining still in the hall, Mr. Este (who was to act the Methodist) came upon the stage, and told them, for all this, he was resolved the farce should be acted. While he was speaking the stage sunk six inches more; on which he ran back in the utmost confusion, and the people as fast as they could out of the door, none staying to look behind him.

Which is the most surprising—that those players acted this farce the next week, or that some hundreds of people came again to see it?

Among the novelists, Fielding ridiculed the Methodists in "Joseph Andrews" and "Amelia," and Smollett caricatured them in "Humphry Clinker." It was assumed in such circles that Methodists were either mad or hypocrites, the latter explanation being favored.

Ridicule was not the only weapon used by the adversaries of Wesley. In excited times an excitable populace was not likely to rest content with literary allusions. Whether the mob was in holiday mood or otherwise made little difference for the luckless Methodists. Wesley was once pelted by a mob in Leeds which was celebrating the choice of the Duke of Tuscany as emperor, and the evangelist tartly

CONTRA MUNDUM

observed that the Lord could not give the English nation the blessings he would because in celebration they would tear their countrymen to pieces.

The excitement which reigned in '45, especially in the north of England, which lay in constant fear of invasion from Scotland, is movingly described in Wesley's Journal, for he was in Newcastle in September, 1745. The town was under heavy guard, and several of the gates had been walled up. In the midst of the turmoil, Wesley wrote a characteristic letter to the mayor, assuring him of the loyalty of the Methodists and suggesting that something should be done about open vice in the city. Then, while cannon were mounted on the walls and the people carried out their goods, Wesley preached on "the wisdom of God in governing the world."

There was no trouble for the Methodists at Newcastle, but the scene is typical of the way in which Wesley moved quietly in the midst of tumult, although he did not always come off so well. Clergymen and gentry were not above inciting the mob against a Methodist preacher, and the mob, panicky at the whisper of "popery" or "treason," was not easy to quell, once its fears were aroused.

At Gwennap, in Wales, two gentlemen with a press-gang forced themselves through the congregation where Wesley was preaching, and ordered their men to seize some of the auditors. The people, led by Wesley, calmly began a hymn, at which one of the gentlemen cried out, "Seize, seize him! I

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

say, seize the preacher for his Majesty's service." When his men did not move, he seized Wesley by the cassock, and cried, "I take you to serve his Majesty!" Wesley's account follows:

'A servant taking his horse, he took me by the arm, and we walked arm-in-arm for about three quarters of a mile. He entertained me all the time with the "wickedness of the fellows belonging to the society." When he was taking breath I said, "Sir, be they what they will, I apprehend it will not justify you in seizing me in this manner, and violently carrying me away, as you said, to serve his Majesty." He replied, "*I seize you! And violently carry you away!* No, sir, no. Nothing like it. I asked you to go with me to my house, and you said you was willing; and if so, you are welcome; and if not, you are welcome to go where you please." I answered, "Sir, I know not if it would be safe for me to go back through the rabble." "Sir," said he, "I will go with you myself." He then called for his horse, and another for me, and rode back with me to the place from whence he took me.

Every effort was made to interfere with Methodist meetings. Drummers marched through the audience; cattle were driven into the open-air meetings. A harlequin once climbed a pole in Moorfields, when Whitefield was preaching, and attempted by indecent actions to draw attention from the preacher. But Methodist preachers were skilled in overcoming such interruptions. The audiences gave way before the drummers and closed behind them again; the cattle were driven off. Even the harlequin was made the basis of scathing remarks concerning the nature

CONTRA MUNDUM

of the opposers. The Methodists met more than interruption, however, and the preachers often stood in danger of their lives.

No second-hand accounts will take the place of the records of the Journal, for Wesley's concise English is admirably adapted to describe stirring scenes in which he was chief actor. His own courage stands out the clearer for his apparent unconsciousness of it.

At Falmouth, Wesley was calling on a sick man.

Almost as soon as I was set down [he says] the house was beset on all sides by an innumerable multitude of people. A louder or more confused noise could hardly be at the taking of a city by storm. At first Mrs. B. and her daughter endeavored to quiet them; but it was labour lost. They might as well have attempted to still the raging of the sea. They were soon glad to shift for themselves, and leave K.E. and me to do as well as we could. The rabble roared with all their throats, "Bring out the Canorum! Where is the Canorum?" (an unmeaning word which the Cornish generally use instead of Methodist). No answer being given, they quickly forced open the outer door and filled the passage. Only a wainscot-partition was between us, which was not likely to stand long. I immediately took down a large looking-glass which hung against it, supposing the whole side would fall in at once. When they began their work, with abundance of bitter imprecations, poor Kitty was utterly astonished, and cried out, "O, sir, what must we do?" I said, "We must pray." Indeed at that time, to all appearance, our lives were not worth an hour's purchase. She asked, "But, sir, is it not better for you to hide yourself? To get into the closet?" I answered, "No. It is best for me to stand just where I am." Among those without were the crews of some

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

privateers, which were lately come into the harbour. Some of these, being angry at the slowness of the rest, thrust them away, and, coming up altogether, set their shoulders to the inner door, and cried out, "Avast, lads, avast!" Away went all the hinges at once, and the door fell back into the room. I stepped forward at once into the midst of them, and said, "Here I am. Which of you has anything to say to me? To which of you have I done any wrong? To you? Or you? Or you?" I continued speaking till I came, bare-headed as I was (for I purposely left my hat, that they might see all my face), into the middle of the street, and then, raising my voice, said, "Neighbors, countrymen! Do you desire to hear me speak?" They cried vehemently, "Yes, yes. He shall speak, he shall. Nobody shall hinder him." But having nothing to stand on, and no advantage of ground, I could be heard by few only. However, I spoke without intermission, and, as far as the sound reached, the people were still; till one or two of their captains turned about and swore not a man should touch him.

In a neighboring parish, Wesley was saved from a similar scene only by the intervention of an Oxford friend, and was told it was rumored that he had been for a long time in France and Spain and was sent to England by the Pretender. He was also told that one of the gentry had declared publicly "in the face of the whole congregation, as they were coming out of the church, 'If any man of this parish dares to hear these fellows, he shall not come to my Christmas feast!'"

At Wednesbury, in October, 1743, the house in which Wesley was lodging was beset by a mob. After a while, with the little group praying in the house,

CONTRA MUNDUM

the mob dispersed. Wesley thought it wise to go, but remained out of deference to the wishes of his friends. The mob came again, and Wesley succeeded in calming them, preferring to go with them to any magistrate. They went to two, who refused to see them. Returning, the Wednesbury mob was met and overpowered by a mob from the village of Walsal.

To attempt speaking was vain [runs Wesley's account of what followed] for the noise on every side was like the roaring of the sea. So they dragged me along till we came to the town, where, seeing the door of a large house open, I attempted to go in; but a man, catching me by the hair, pulled me back into the middle of the mob. They made no more stop till they had carried me through the main street, from one end of the town to the other. I continued speaking all the time to those within hearing, feeling no pain or weariness. At the west end of the town, seeing a door half open, I made toward it, and would have gone in, but a gentleman in the shop would not suffer me, saying they would pull the house down to the ground. However, I stood at the door and asked, "Are you willing to hear me speak?" Many cried out, "No, no, knock his brains out; down with him; kill him at once." Others said, "Nay, but we will hear him first." I began asking, "What evil have I done? Which of you all have I wronged in word or deed?" and continued speaking for above a quarter of an hour, till my voice suddenly failed. Then the floods began to lift up their voice again, many crying out, "Bring him away! Bring him away!"

In the meantime my strength and my voice returned, and I broke out aloud into prayer. And now the man who just before headed the mob turned and said, "Sir, I will spend

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

my life for you: follow me, and not one soul shall touch a hair of your head." Two or three of his fellows confirmed his words, and got close to me immediately. At the same time, the gentleman in the shop cried out, "For shame, for shame! Let him go." An honest butcher, who was a little farther off, said it was a shame they should do thus; and pulled back four or five, one after another, who were running on the most fiercely. The people then, as if it had been by common consent, fell back to the right and left, while those three or four men took me between them, and carried me through them all. But on the bridge the mob rallied again: we therefore went on one side over the milldam, and thence through the meadows, till, a little before ten, God brought me safe to Wednesbury, having lost only one flap of my waistcoat and a little skin from one of my hands.

True to his habit, Wesley reviewed the happenings of that night, finding in them a remarkable "chain of providences" and analyzing his own mental reactions. He had not stumbled when to have fallen under the feet of the mob would have been death; the flap of his waistcoat which contained a bank-note had been only half torn off; and a man who had rushed at him with his arm raised had only stopped, stroked Wesley's head, and said, "What soft hair he has!" For himself, Wesley had been perfectly calm, taking no thought "for one moment before another." Once he had thought that, if they threw him into the river, the papers in his pocket would be ruined; but he had no fear, since he was sure that he could swim across in safety, clothed as he was.

John Wesley was not alone in braving the attacks of mobs. Only five days after his brother's experience in Wednesbury, Charles Wesley preached to the little congregation there, where Methodist houses were marked by broken window-panes. The lay preachers were even more subject to attack, since their manners were cruder and their presumption in preaching more resented. Contemporary accounts of their sermons from unsympathetic hands would indicate that there must have been in the sermons of the helpers much that was offensive to good taste. If so, the preachers paid dearly for the offense. James Wheatley was dragged by the hair through the streets of Norwich. Moses Dale was carried around Northwich on a butcher's block, set down in the market-place and cow-horns blown into his ears until he was almost deafened. Others were pressed as soldiers, or had their houses torn down and their families abused. Wesley was proud of his preachers: "For what pay," he asked, "could we procure men to do this service—to be always ready to go to prison or to death?"

Sometimes the rioters fell into their own pit. At Bolton, Wesley was preaching in spite of flying stones, when one of his tormentors, bawling at his ear, was struck by a stone. Another was hit in the forehead. A third stretched out his hand for the preacher, and was hit on the knuckle with a sharp rock. Wesley says that "he shook his hand, and was very quiet till I concluded my discourse and went

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

away." In Ireland, Wesley often found uninvited, but appreciated, champions who used other than the weapons of the Spirit. At one place, three interrupters were stilled, the first two by people leading the disturbers away; the third, a noisy man, was floored by a butcher—"not one of the Methodists," said Wesley, adding, "so I quietly finished my discourse."

Appeal to the authorities was often useless; they were either unwilling or unable to act. Wesley's protest to the mayor of Cork, in 1750, was as cutting as it was short. "I fear God and honour the king," he wrote. "I earnestly desire to be at peace with all men. I have not willingly given any offence either to the magistrates, the clergy, or any of the inhabitants of the city of Cork, neither do I desire of them but to be treated (I will not say as a clergyman, or a Christian, but) with such justice and humanity as are due to a Jew, a Turk, or a pagan."

The ecclesiastical courts, as Samuel Wesley had predicted, were slow to proceed against the Methodists. The more fiery of the bishops were content to issue pamphlets against Methodist enthusiasm, while the others were perhaps as little disposed to welcome troublesome complaints as troublesome Methodists. An Irish clergyman was wont to protest to Archbishop Ryder, of Tuam, about the Methodism of Walter Shirley. Once he hastened to the Archbishop, saying, "O, your Grace, I have such a circumstance to communicate to you, one that will

astonish you!" To the Archbishop's inquiry, he replied with his new charge against Shirley: "Why, my lord, he wears—white stockings." "Very anti-clerical and very dreadful, indeed," answered the prelate, and drawing his chair closer to the informer, he asked, "Does Mr. Shirley wear them over his boots?" "No, your Grace." "Well, sir," advised Ryder, "the first time you find him with his stockings over his boots, pray inform me, and I shall deal accordingly with him."

The secular courts were as slow to protect as the ecclesiastical courts were slow to prosecute the Methodists. In the inferior courts, indeed, the magistrates were often hostile, but Wesley at last appealed to the superior courts and found protection. In 1749 he declared: "There is one, and only one way—move the King's Bench for information against them. This is a way which has never failed us yet." While local difficulties continued until well into the nineteenth century, the Wesleys themselves were more and more relieved from danger of mob violence. This, Wesley attributed to the policy of the Crown. But the truth is that while local Methodist preachers could yet expect the solicitous attentions of boisterous spirits, Wesley and his brother gradually won a grudging respect, so that, in later years the leaders were but little molested.

CHAPTER VII

“POPE JOHN”

THE practical problems of organizing his work drove Wesley back to the methods to which he was committed by temperament as well as by conviction. In the Oxford Club Wesley had an organization which, with modification, proved useful both in the university and in America. His new interest in personal, mystical religion led him to shift somewhat his own conception of the aim of such a society, but he never lost faith in the idea of a methodical, regulated association of seekers after holiness. The old religious societies, including his own Oxford Club, did not satisfy him, because they lacked the mystical note. The Moravians had disappointed him, both because of what he considered their extreme mysticism and because they seemed to him unsympathetic with his own Church of England. He now asked himself: Could not societies be organized on the Oxford plan of promoting personal religion and yet be open both to churchmen and dissenters alike? Could not such a religious society invite every one—regardless of his theology—who was converted or who was “groaning so to be”?

“POPE JOHN”

Wesley's answer to these questions was his organization of the Methodist societies. The proposal to disregard the barriers of church and of orthodoxy was in itself so daring as to be revolutionary. “I am sick of opinions,” said Wesley; and he insisted, as early as 1742, that the distinguishing marks of a Methodist “are not his opinions of any sort, his assenting to this or that scheme of religion, his embracing any particular set of notions, his espousing the judgment of one man or another.” To his conference he put his view as to theological differences in untheological language: “I have no more right to object to a man for holding a different opinion from mine than I have to differ with a man because he wears a wig and I wear my own hair; but if he take his wig off and shakes the powder in my eyes, I shall consider it my duty to get quit of him as soon as possible.”

The rules which governed his societies, adopted at the beginning of his work, state that the sole requirement for admission is a “desire to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins.” In extreme old age, he reaffirmed this position from which he had never deviated:

One circumstance more is quite peculiar to the people called Methodists: that is, the terms upon which any person may be admitted to their society: They do not impose, in order to their admission, any opinions whatsoever. Let them hold particular or general redemption, absolute or condi-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

tional decrees: let them be Churchmen, or Dissenters, Presbyterians or Independents, it is no obstacle. Let them choose one mode of baptism or another, it is no bar to their admission. The Presbyterian may be a Presbyterian still; the Independent and Anabaptist use his own mode of worship. So may the Quaker; and none will contend with him about it. They think and let think.

To create such a society in a century in which denominational lines were political as well as theological would seem to have been a hopeless task, but to this task Wesley brought a genius for organization. He began by organizing small groups on the model of the Oxford Club and the religious societies which he and his brother had organized in Georgia. Then, by chance, in providing for a debt incurred in building a meeting place in Bristol, he hit upon a plan for close supervision of the societies in his absence. Leaders originally appointed to collect a penny a week from each member who could pay were charged also with looking after the moral and spiritual condition of the membership. Soon every member of the societies belonged to special groups for confession or for "testimony" and was under direct and careful supervision.

If uniformity of opinion was not required of the Methodists, uniformity of conduct was. The "General Rules," which have been preserved in the Methodist Church to-day, indicate the kind of life which was considered methodistic:

“ POPE JOHN ”

There is only one condition previously required in those who desire admission into these Societies [so run the Rules]; a desire to flee from the wrath to come, to be saved from their sins. But wherever this is really fixed in the soul, it will be shown by its fruits. It is therefore expected of all who continue therein, that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

First, By doing no harm; by avoiding evil in every kind: especially that which is most generally practised. Such is:

The taking the name of God in vain;

The profaning the day of the Lord, either by doing ordinary work thereon, or by buying or selling;

Drunkenness, buying or selling spirituous liquors; or drinking them (unless in cases of extreme necessity);

Fighting, quarrelling, brawling; going to law; returning evil for evil or railing for railing; the using many words in buying or selling.

The buying or selling uncustomed goods;

The giving or taking things on usury;

Uncharitable or unprofitable conversation;

Doing to others as we would not they should do unto us;

Doing what we know is not for the glory of God: as

The putting on of gold, or costly apparel;

The taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus;

The singing those songs, or reading those books, which do not tend to the knowledge or love of God;

Softness or needless self-indulgence;

Laying up treasures upon earth.

It is expected of all who continue in these Societies that they should continue to evidence their desire for Salvation,

Secondly, By doing good; by being, in every kind, merciful

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

after their power; as they have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as possible, to all men:

To their bodies, of the ability which God giveth, by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the naked, by visiting or helping them that are sick, or in prison:

To their souls, by instructing, reproofing, or exhorting all we have any intercourse with; trampling under-foot that enthusiastic doctrine of devils, that "we are not to do good unless our heart is free to it."

By doing good, especially to them that are of the household of faith, or groaning so to be; employing them preferably to others, buying one of another, helping each other in business; and that so much the more because the world will love its own, and them only.

By all possible diligence and frugality, that the gospel be not blamed.

By running with patience the race that is set before them; denying themselves and taking up their cross daily; submitting to bear the reproach of Christ, to be as the filth and offscouring of the world; and that men should say all manner of evil of them falsely, for their Lord's sake.

It is expected of all who desire to continue in these Societies that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation,

Thirdly, By attending upon all the ordinances of God; such are:

The public worship of God;

The ministry of the word, either read or expounded;

The supper of the Lord;

Private prayer;

Searching the Scriptures; and fasting, or abstinence.

Some of these rules were not easily kept by the Methodists. The rule against smuggled goods was

“POPE JOHN”

especially distasteful to societies in southern England where smuggling was a respectable occupation. On these points, Wesley made no compromise with the feelings of his members, and his method of dealing with his followers appears in his tract, “A Word to a Smuggler.” “Open smuggling,” he wrote, “is robbing on the highway . . . A smuggler of this kind is no honester than a highwayman. They may shake hands together. . . . Private smuggling is just the same with picking of pockets.”

His rule with regard to gold and costly apparel caused even more difficulty because the temptation to violate it was more wide-spread. In “Advice to the People called Methodists with Regard to Dress,” Wesley interpreted his rule in unmistakable language:

Wear no gold, (whatever Officers of State may do, or Magistrates, as the ensign of their office,) no pearls, or precious stones; use no curling of hair, or costly apparel, how grave soever. I advise those who are able to receive this saying, Buy no velvets, no silks, no fine linen, no superfluities, no mere ornaments, though ever so much in fashion. Wear nothing, though you have it already, which is of a glaring colour, or which is in any kind gay, glistering, or showy; nothing made in the very height of fashion, nothing apt to attract the eyes of the by-standers. I do not advise women to wear rings, ear-rings, necklaces, lace (of whatever kind or colour), or ruffles, which, by little and little, may easily shoot out from one to twelve inches deep. Neither do I advise men to wear coloured waist-coats, shining stockings, glittering or costly buckles or buttons, either on their coats

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

or in their sleeves, any more than gay, fashionable, or expensive perukes.

One of Wesley's chief objections to costly dress was that the money thus used might have been turned to other channels. "If those who do observe them [the Rules], employ the money they thus save in the most excellent manner, then a part of what before only served to fat a few rich tradesmen for hell, will suffice to feed and clothe and employ many poor that seek the kingdom of heaven." Since he was thinking mainly of the economic phase of the matter, he did not recommend any uniformity or singularity of dress such as the Quakers used, recommending rather that each individual conform to the custom of his country and times. When taxed with inconsistency in thus advising conformity to the customs of the country, he explained somewhat tartly: ". . . when I appear in public, I am decently appareled, according to my age and the custom of England; sometimes in a short coat, sometimes in a nightgown,¹ sometimes in a gown and cassock."

Wesley also undertook to direct the freeholders of his societies in their voting. He not only forbade taking money in return for a vote, but he declared that voter perjured who received entertainment, meat or drink. His advice to the voter was: "Act as if the whole election depended upon your single vote, and as if the whole Parliament de-

¹ A "dressing-gown" in eighteenth-century usage.

“POPE JOHN”

pended (and therein the whole nation) on that single person whom you now choose to be a member of it.” A man that loves God should be preferred to all others, but, in lieu of such a one—thought Wesley the Tory—a voter should support him “that loves the King, King George.” “A King is a lovely, sacred name. He is a Minister of God unto thee for good.” To those who said that they voted for the country, not the king, Wesley replied: “Who taught you to separate your King from your country? . . . Is not the interest of the King of England, and of the country of England, one and the same?”

Advice as to voting was not confined to tracts, for Wesley personally took a hand in elections, trying to persuade his followers to aid the king’s party. In this he was not confined to the Tory interest, but endeavored to support the candidate who was approved by the king. In 1756 the parliamentary election at Bristol was hotly contested, and the Tory candidate, Jarrit Smith, Esq., was thought to lean toward the Pretender’s cause, while the Whig candidate, John Spencer, Esq.,—afterward Earl Spencer—was favored by the king. Wesley threw his support to Spencer, and wrote to a friend concerning the election:

Last night, I desired all the freemen of our society to meet me after preaching, and enlarged a little upon His Majesty’s character, and the reasons we had to spare no pains in his

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

service. I believe all who had been wavering were fully convinced.

The Methodists seem to have been convinced, but Spencer's opponent was elected.

Even tea-drinking came in for attention from the head of the Methodists. Wesley had been convinced that copious drinking of green tea was injurious, especially productive of nervous disorders. For several years he himself left off tea-drinking. When he stopped the use of it in the four headquarters, London, Bristol, Kingswood, and Newcastle, he found that he was saving, on these four households, some fifty pounds a year. This was irrefutable argument, so he most strongly advised his people to leave off tea-drinking altogether and to apply to charity the money thus saved. In place of tea he recommended warm milk, sage, green balm, mint or pennyroyal tea, anything which would be cheaper and, as he thought, less injurious. For those who feared refusing tea would offend others, Wesley provided a ready-made answer:

If any ask you, simply reply, "I do not drink tea; I never use it." If they say, "Why, you did drink it"; answer, "I did so; but I have left it off a considerable time." Those who have either good-nature or good-manners will say no more. But if any should impertinently add, "O, but why did you leave it off?" answer mildly, "Because I thought water-gruel (suppose) was wholesomer, as well as cheaper." If they, with still greater ill-manners and impertinence, go on, "What, you do it because Mr. Wesley bids you"; reply

“POPE JOHN”

calmly, “True; I do it because Mr. Wesley, on good reasons, advises me so to do.” If they add the trite cant phrase, “What, you follow man!” reply, without any emotion, “Yes, I follow any man, you or him, or any other, who gives me good reason for so doing.” If they persist in cavilling, close the whole matter with, “I never drink it, nor dispute about it.”



Yet the Methodists were allowed latitude—at least in theory—where one would least expect it. If Wesley was puritanic in his morals, he had, nevertheless, a tolerance not always credited to puritanism. The Methodist rules were directed against no specific amusements; the only warning was against “taking such diversions as cannot be used in the name of the Lord Jesus.” That this is not an oversight appears from Wesley’s own words. In one of his sermons, he said that he could not himself go to the theater or play cards, but he continued: “Possibly others can: I am not obliged to pass any sentence on them that are otherwise minded. I leave them to their own Master; to Him let them stand or fall.” This was Wesley’s principle, although in the societies he enforced a stricter and narrower discipline.

Oversight of the Methodists, who were rapidly increasing throughout the British Isles, soon required so much time that he was compelled to employ other preachers. At the suggestion of his mother, Wesley allowed a layman, Thomas Maxfield, to

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

preach. The results were so satisfactory that he extended the practice, taking laymen—stone-masons, soldiers, small tradesmen—and using them both to preach and to look after the societies. John Nelson, John Bennet, Thomas Maxfield, and others traveled almost as incessantly as Wesley and preached, if not with equal intelligence, at least with equal fervor. Several of the early preachers were soldiers when converted or were later “pressed” into service, so that Methodist societies were organized in the camps of English troops abroad as well as in England. At the battle of Fontenoy, May 1, 1745, four lay preachers were killed. One of them, Clements by name, had his arm broken by a musket-ball. When they would have carried him from the field, he protested that he had yet an arm left to hold his sword. When that arm was shot away, he cried out that he was as happy as he could be out of paradise. Another preacher, John Evans, having both legs shot away by a chain-shot, was laid across a cannon to die, where he exhorted as long as he could speak.

Wesley organized his preachers and governed them even more arbitrarily than he did the members. For their guidance he drew up some rules analogous to the General Rules for the societies as a whole:

(1) Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time; neither spend any more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

(2) Be serious. Let your motto be, “Holiness to the Lord.” Avoid all lightness, jesting, and foolish talking.

“POPE JOHN”

- (3) Converse sparingly and cautiously with women; particularly with young women.
- (4) Take no step toward marriage, without first consulting your brethren.
- (5) Believe evil of no one. . . . ✓
- (6) Speak evil of no one. . . . ✓
- (7) Tell every one what you think wrong in him. ✓ . .
- (8) Do not affect the gentleman. You have no more to do with this character than with that of a dancing master. . . .
- (9) Be ashamed of nothing but sin: Not of fetching wood (if time permit) or drawing water; not of cleaning your own shoes, or your neighbour's.
- (10) Be punctual. Do everything exactly at the time. And in general, do not mend our Rules, but keep them; not for wrath, but for conscience's sake.
- (11) You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. . . . Observe: It is not your business to preach so many times, and to take care of this or that society; but to save as many souls as you can; to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance, and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord. And remember! A Methodist Preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist discipline! Therefore you will need all the sense you have, and to have all your wits about you!
- (12) Act in all things, not according to your own will, but as a son in the gospel. As such it is your part to employ your time in the manner which we direct; partly, in preaching and visiting from house to house; partly, in reading, meditation, and prayer. Above all, if you labour with us in our Lord's vineyard, it is needful that you should do that part of the work which we advise, at those times and places which we judge most for his glory.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Wesley urged his preachers to spend at least five hours out of the twenty-four in reading. They were not to confine themselves to the Bible, and, if they could not buy other books, Wesley agreed to furnish them to the value of five pounds. At London, Bristol, and Newcastle-on-Tyne, libraries for the preachers were established which included sixteen Latin, twelve Greek writers, and a Hebrew Bible. At the first conference, the question was asked, "What books may an Assistant read?" The answer named the Greek Testament and more than a dozen other books in Greek and Latin, Virgil, Horace, Epictetus, Plato, and Homer appearing in the list. One must remember that Wesley's helpers, although chosen mainly from the trades, were not illiterate men. One seventh of the preachers in the connection during Wesley's lifetime, eventually took orders in the Establishment, and a careful study of the others shows that the most of them had a good general education.

To requirements concerning studies, Wesley added detailed instructions as to preaching. A sermon was meant "(1) To invite; (2) To convince; (3) To offer Christ; (4) To build up." "Take care of anything awkward or affected, either in your gesture, phrase, or pronunciation," counseled Wesley. "In repeating the Lord's Prayer, remember to say 'hallowed,' not 'hollowed' . . ." The preacher should avoid "quaint" words, such as *object*, *originate*. In spelling, the preacher should eschew "the

“POPE JOHN”

fashionable impropriety” of leaving out the *u* in words like honour and vigour.

Over his preachers Wesley exercised unyielding authority. The conferences were free discussions between Wesley, his lay-preachers, and such evangelical clergymen as were interested enough to come; but they were dominated by Wesley himself. A woman observer at one of the conferences quoted a preacher as saying that there was “much concord,” but “Mr. Wesley seemed to do all the business himself.” Indeed, Wesley would allow no appeal from his authority on the part of either people or preacher. In the “Large Minutes,” which were issued and revised from 1744 to 1789, Wesley stated his conception of his own power in no uncertain terms. “What is that power?” he asked. “It is a power of admitting into, and excluding from, the societies under my care; of choosing and removing Stewards; of receiving or not receiving Helpers; of appointing them when, where, and how to help me, and of desiring any of them to confer with me when I see good.” To objections against his control over the preachers, Wesley answered:

But some of our Helpers say, “This is shackling free-born Englishmen”; and demand a free Conference, that is, a meeting of all the Preachers, wherein all things shall be determined by most votes. I answer, “It is possible, after my death, something of this kind may take place; but not while I live.” To me the Preachers have engaged themselves to submit, to serve me as sons in the gospel; but they are

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

not thus engaged to any man or number of men besides. To me the people in general will submit; but they will not thus submit to any other. It is nonsense, then, to call my using his power, "shackling free-born Englishmen." None needs to submit to it unless he will; so that there is no shackling in the case. Every Preacher and every member may leave me when he pleases. But while he chooses to stay it is on the same terms that he joined me at first.

This was the attitude that won for Wesley the title of Pope John. ✓

The judgment of one of Wesley's loyal followers was that no man—not even "St. Paul himself"—ever possessed so much power over so large a body of men. But he added that "from the creation of the world" so large a body had never looked up to any single person with a more profound reverence than did the preachers to John Wesley. In fact, the autocracy of Wesley is but evidence of his ability to command loyalty and to inspire reverence. The Methodist societies were carefully organized, but it was John Wesley who breathed into this organization the breath of life. ✓

His very appearance and demeanor contributed to his influence over men. John Hampson said that "many, who had been greatly prejudiced against him, have been known to change their opinion the moment they were introduced into his presence." He had the ability to make himself at home in any company. "Had he lived in a Court all his days," wrote one who knew Wesley well, "his address

“POPE JOHN”

could not have been more easy and polite: yet he could be quite content amongst the most homely Tradesmen and Peasants, and suit his Discourse to the meanest capacity.” “I hate to meet John Wesley,” said Johnson to Boswell; “the dog enchanteth me with his conversation, and then breaks away to go and see some old woman.”

Wesley not only knew how to suit his discourse to the “meanest capacity,” but he could also bear hardship along with the sturdiest of his preachers. John Nelson, a former stone-mason, was with Wesley on an early preaching tour in Cornwall. They had to sleep on the floor, Wesley using Nelson’s greatcoat for a pillow while Nelson laid his head on a copy of Burkitt’s “Notes on the New Testament.” Nelson says that after spending nearly three weeks in this way, Wesley one morning about three o’clock clapped him on the shoulder and said: “Brother Nelson, let us be of good cheer. I have one whole side yet, for the skin is off but one side.” Nelson remembered that on the same trip Wesley told him that they should be thankful for plenty of blackberries, “for,” said he, “this is the best country I ever saw for getting a stomach, but the worst that ever I saw for getting food.”

Despite his autocratic method, Wesley was able to make the *amende honorable* when he felt it necessary. At a conference, Wesley, as was his custom, called the names of his preachers and asked if there was any complaint against them. In calling

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

the roll, he omitted his own name and that of his brother. One of the preachers rose to object to the president's action. Wesley warmly answered that he would not submit to examination by his preachers. "Then," replied the preacher, "I have done"; and sat down. Wesley recovered his poise and called his own name, whereupon the preacher complained that Wesley had often promised to visit his circuit, but had not done so, to the grief of the people. Wesley made no reply until after breakfast. When he returned to the conference, he apologized to the preacher publicly and to the conference for his "improper warmth."

For many years toward the close of Wesley's life, Joseph Bradford was his traveling companion. One day, Wesley told Bradford to take some letters to the post. Bradford replied that he would take them after preaching. "Take them now, Joseph," said Wesley. A contention followed, which ended with Wesley saying, "Then you and I must part." In the morning, Wesley called Bradford, and asked, "Joseph, have you considered what I said, that we must part?" "Please yourself, sir." "Will you ask my pardon, Joseph?" "No, sir." "You can't?" "No, sir." "Then will I yours, Joseph," said Wesley. The truth was, that, receiving so much adulation, Wesley appreciated occasional contradiction. "No man in England has contradicted me so much as you have done," he once said to Henry Moore, "and yet I love you still."

“POPE JOHN”

Wesley had a stock of humor little suspected to-day by those who read only his commonly known works. He loved to tell stories, and his varied experiences in Europe and America gave him a fund from which he drew to the delight of many a provincial fireside. No one can estimate the educational value to England of one Oxford don traveling constantly for half a century and always a welcome guest in thousands of homes. Even in his old age the young people loved to hear him, for, as Alexander Knox said, “No cynical remarks on the levity of youth embittered his discourse. No applaudive retrospect to past times marked his present discontent.”

Grave Thomas Walsh complained that Wesley’s proverbs tempted him “to levity.” If Wesley in his younger days discouraged laughter as sinful, he must have repented, for his later friends bear unanimous witness that he was the most delightful of companions. Southey observes very justly that Wesley objected to many innocent amusements, forgetting that he himself had no need of such entertainment, since wherever he went his presence “made a festival among his friends.” He was always on the move, meeting new people and revisiting old friends. He did not realize that the stay-at-homes were not so well provided with diversion as he.

His native courtesy often stood Wesley in good stead when he reproved others. Once when dining with a friend, a preacher remarked on the abundance

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

of food and asked Wesley what he thought of such a table as an example of self-denial. Wesley quietly suggested that the loaded table offered the perturbed preacher a most excellent opportunity to practise that virtue. At another time one of his preachers detected several rings on the hand of a daughter of his host. He called Wesley's attention and said, "What do you think of this, sir, for a Methodist hand?" The old man, whose distaste for jewelry was well known, smiled and answered, "The hand is very beautiful."

Such was the man who ruled the Methodists for fifty years. To them he was "Mr. Wesley," and happy was the household that could boast of entertaining him, and thrice happy was the Methodist who had the privilege of working with him, of being his "son in the gospel."

12-12-00

CHAPTER VIII

INTERLUDE

IN 1748, John Wesley was forty-five years old. For ten years he had labored unremittingly, traveling four or five thousand miles each year, mainly on horseback, and preaching incessantly. He had been busy extending the method of the Oxford Club, modified by his pietistic experience and sympathies, in the organization of thousands of converts scattered throughout the British Isles. At last, Wesley paused to think of other things.

Since he left Georgia Wesley had shown no signs of romantic interest in any woman. He had, of course, kept up a voluminous correspondence with many women who wrote him for counsel or showed appreciation of religious epistles from one of the best of English letter-writers. Many details of society administration, as well as the oversight of the headquarters in London, Bristol, and Newcastle—often spoken of as Mr. Wesley's “houses”—required the services of women. But Wesley had entertained no thought of marrying. He had even published a tract recommending the celibate life as good for the soul. But in 1748 he changed his mind. His

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

own account is that in a conference in London several of his brethren objected to his published views on marriage, and, he adds, "convinced me that a believer might marry without suffering loss in his soul."

Wesley's views on marriage were in part an inheritance from asceticism. He also supposed himself to have been convinced by St. Paul's practical observation, that a married man has distractions which make it hard for him to serve the Lord with a single heart. The Pauline precept was italicized by Wesley's love-affair with Sophia Hopkey, which showed the astonished Methodist how distracting such a passion can be. He was also influenced, characteristically enough, by his fear that marriage would abridge the funds available for his endless charities and would hinder his itinerant preaching. But all his objections were overcome by the arguments of his brethren assisted by his own experiences. In the latter category must be placed his acquaintance with Grace Murray.¹

Grace Murray was a sailor's widow and, in 1748, was at the "Orphan House" in Newcastle, engaged in work with the societies there. She was born in Newcastle, her parents apparently having been small tradespeople. As a young woman Grace entered service in London and remained in a household in the metropolis until she married Murray.

¹ Wesley's account of the Grace Murray affair is given in full, see pp. 267-351.

INTERLUDE

She had the orthodox Methodist experience, having heard Wesley before he went to America and having gone through many changes of hope and despair before her final conversion. In addition, she was of mystical temperament but capable of practical and prolonged service, particularly in the peculiar work of the Methodist organization.

In August, 1748, following the conference in London when Wesley was convinced that he might lawfully marry, he fell ill at Newcastle and was nursed by Grace Murray. At this time he "observed her more narrowly than ever before, both as to her temper, sense, and behaviour." In truth, Wesley never had time to observe any woman with reasonable "narrowness" except when he was ill. Sophia Hopkey had nursed him in Georgia; Grace Murray nursed him at Newcastle; and he was to have yet one more nurse. The result of Wesley's observations was that, when he had recovered a little, he spoke to Grace, "sliding into it" he knew not how. "If ever I marry," he said with noteworthy caution, "I think you will be the person." Later he spoke "more directly," and she seemed amazed. "This is too great a blessing for me:" she cried, "I can't tell how to believe it. This is all I could have wished for under Heaven—if I had dared to wish for it." Wesley naturally assumed that she had accepted him.

At her request he took her with him to visit the societies in Yorkshire and Derbyshire. Then he left

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

her at Cheshire with one of his preachers, John Bennet. Did he remember that, a year before, Grace had nursed John Bennet through a serious illness?

Some time afterward Wesley received a letter from Bennet and another from Grace Murray asking his consent to their marriage. Wesley says that he was amazed, but he must have been busy with other matters, for he wrote a mild answer taking it for granted that they were already married. Instead of marrying Bennet, Grace Murray passed a distressed winter unable to choose between her two lovers. "One cannot excuse her behaviour all this time," observed her senior admirer, "doubtless she should have renounced one or the other. But those who know human nature will pity her much, at least as much as they will blame her."

In the spring Grace came to Bristol and explained to Wesley that she had not considered their contract binding because she could not think that what Wesley had proposed would ever come to pass. Reconciled, they went together to Ireland, spending several months visiting the societies. At this work Grace Murray was proficient. She met the women bands, visited the sick, prayed with the mourners, and, in the meantime, was an itinerant housekeeper for Wesley. At the end of the journey Wesley was more than ever in love, and on the return from Ireland they renewed their betrothal.

At Bristol, one of the women in the society told Grace some idle gossip which caused her to write

INTERLUDE

again to Bennet and renew her affair with him. In London, a gossip advised her to leave off thinking of Wesley. The societies would make life too unpleasant, said this counselor, and the result would be misery for Wesley as well as his wife. When they arrived at Epworth, Wesley gave her up to Bennet on the assumption that she loved Bennet more. Then, at Newcastle, he accepted her again. At Berwick, the distraught woman begged Wesley to marry her at once. He calmly replied that this could not be done, since it was necessary: "1. To satisfy J[ohn] B[ennet]; 2. To procure my brother's consent; and 3. To send an account of the reasons on which I proceeded, to every Helper and every Society in England, at the same time desiring their prayers." Grace Murray could only answer that she would not be willing to wait longer than one year, and Wesley reassured her that it might not take that long. ✓

Having made clear to his fiancée his intention to abide by the rule of the Holy Club which forbade a member to marry without the consent of the others, Wesley settled down to write a forty-six-page account of the spiritual peregrinations of Grace Murray. Finishing that, in order "to form a clearer judgment of her real character," he "talked at large with all those who were disgusted at her, and inquired into their reasons for it." These reasons he found trivial enough. She was accused of having been so impudent as to ride into town alone with him; of having refused to lend her saddle; of having

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

bought a Holland shift and a "Joseph" before she needed it; of being proud and insolent; of buying an apron worth ten shillings. These charges Wesley duly considered and absolved his intended bride on each count. He then turned to the first item on his program, the pacification of John Bennet. But while he was moving toward that, he was seized with a premonition of disaster. He was astonished to find himself beginning a letter to Grace with the lines:

"There is I know not what of sad presage,
That tells me, we shall never meet again."

On the following Sunday words in the first lesson came "as a sword" to his heart: "Son of man, behold I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke." Eleven years before he had read these words in Savannah and had been "pierced through as with a sword." His love-affairs coincided strangely with the calendar of lessons in the Prayer-book. This time also his forebodings were justified, for Charles was hastening to the rescue of the family name.

"The thought of marrying at all," so John interpreted his brother's attitude, "but especially of my marrying a servant and one so low-born, appeared above measure shocking to him." On his way to Newcastle, Charles was informed that Grace Murray was really engaged to John Bennet. At Newcastle, he was told that his brother was "beyond all sense and reason." Armed with such information he burst in upon John, protesting that all

INTERLUDE

the preachers would leave and the societies disperse if the leader "married so mean a woman." John placidly agreed to leave the matter to their mutual friend, Vincent Perronet.

The better to answer Charles, who had declared that love had put out his brother's eyes, John sat down to write out a statement of his case. His paper, arrayed in thirty-two propositions, is irrefutable proof that, whatever else love had done for him, it had not affected his incurable passion for logic.

Wesley reviewed in his statement the reasons why he had held that a preacher, especially himself, should remain single. His theoretical objections had been removed by further study and the arguments of his brethren. His practical objections had been overcome in other ways. His belief that he could not afford a wife had held only until he had found that there were women in the world who were both able and willing to keep *him*. Moreover, his marriage would not add to his expense if he married one whom he supported already as his helper and who would be willing that their children (if any) should be educated at the school for preachers' children at Kingswood. Lastly, Grace Murray was the proper woman, for she would prove a helpmeet in his work. In support of this, he arrayed her qualities in impressive paragraphs.

First, she was a good housekeeper. She was also a capable nurse, a qualification which his ill health

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

at this period made doubly precious in his eyes. As a companion, she had good sense and was "of a mild, sprightly, cheerful, and yet serious temper." She was a tried and faithful friend, and—most important for *his* wife—she was possessed of "grace and gifts and fruit" as a laborer in the gospel of Christ.

On this last point, Wesley was enthusiastic, not to say extravagant. His most fulsome praise was later crossed out of his manuscript, but its presence in the first draft testifies to the merits of Grace Murray as a Methodist. She would be willing and able to accompany him on his journeys. Her presence would defend him against "unholy desires and inordinate affections," which, he adds naïvely, "I never did entirely conquer for six months together" before meeting her. In addition to safeguarding her husband, she would safeguard others. "She would guard many from inordinate affection for me, to which they would be far less exposed, both because they would have far less hope of success, and because I should converse far more sparingly with them; perhaps not in private with any young women at all; at least not with any member of our own Societies."

As for the objections raised against the marriage, Wesley thought little of them. He cared not that his intended was not a gentlewoman; he did not hope to find a gentlewoman with the proper qualifications. Since Grace Murray had been his servant, he knew her all the better. At this time he

INTERLUDE

thought he would marry no one who had not been with him some time. He was aware of what the gossips would say, that she had been his mistress before she was his wife. What if Grace Murray had traveled with him? He served notice on all that he would not marry any woman until he had proof that she both could and would travel with him. He was to remember this later.

So he marshaled his reasons, paraded them on his pages, marched them relentlessly to his conclusion: "(1) I have Scriptural reason to marry; (2) I know no person so proper as this."

Charles left the next morning, and, while John went on about his preaching, having forebodings, dreaming of Grace Murray, examining his conscience to see if he were guilty of inordinate affection, and calmly committing the whole matter to God, Charles was bulldozing Grace Murray and persuading John Bennet. On November 5, 1749, some one came to Wesley and told him that Grace Murray and Bennet were married two days before. On the heels of this messenger came Charles to inform his brother that he had renounced all intercourse with him but such as he would have with an heathen man and a publican. But in a little while, amid the crying and entreaties of Whitefield and John Nelson, who were present, the two brothers fell on each other's necks. On the next day the bride and groom appeared, and Wesley learned the way in which Charles persuaded them to marriage. He forgave

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

all, only adding, "who can redress the wrong?" On his way to London, Wesley poured out his soul in thirty-one six-line stanzas. Later he quoted Lamentations: "Why should a living man complain? a man for the punishment of his sins?"

John Bennet soon left Wesley's connection, and in later days was identified with his Calvinistic opponents. Years afterward, Henry Moore went with Wesley, then an old man, to see Grace Bennet in London, where her son was preaching at a chapel in Moorfields. The meeting was soon over, and Wesley was never heard to mention her name again.

While the reader's mind is keyed to a minor note, the story of Wesley's love-affairs may as well be concluded. Three years after John Bennet had married Grace Murray, the London papers announced that John Wesley had married a merchant's widow, one Mrs. Vazeille, then living in Threadneedle Street. They added various complimentary remarks, including the information that she had a jointure of ten thousand pounds.

Two weeks before his marriage, John told Charles of his intention, but took care this time not to mention the lady's name. Charles, who had married four months after breaking up his brother's affair with Grace Murray, reacted according to formula:

I was thunderstruck, and could only answer he had given me the first blow, and his marriage would come like the

INTERLUDE

coup de grâce. Trusty Ned Perronet followed, and told me the person was Mrs. Vazeille, one of whom I never had the least suspicion. I refused his company to chapel, and retired to mourn with my faithful Sally. Groaned all the day, and several following ones, under my own and the people's burden. I could eat no pleasant food, nor preach nor rest by night or day.

But remembering perhaps the estrangement which almost resulted from his meddling in the Grace Murray affair Charles this time attempted no interference. Crossing London Bridge on Saturday, February 10th (1751), John had fallen and struck his ankle against a stone. He preached that day, but as the sprain grew worse he was removed to the home of Mrs. Vazeille. He spent the remainder of the week there, "partly in prayer, reading, and conversation, partly in writing an *Hebrew Grammar* and *Lessons for Children*." On the Monday following, he was married.

Wesley had preached on Sunday, the day before his marriage; he likewise preached on Tuesday, the day after his marriage, although he was compelled to preach kneeling on account of his injury. Two weeks later he set out for Bristol, leaving his wife behind him. After returning to London for a few days, he started for the North. A month after his wedding he wrote in his Journal, perhaps with an eye on Charles, who had settled down after his happy marriage: "I cannot understand how a Methodist preacher can answer it to God, to preach one

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

sermon or travel one day less, in a married than in a single state. In this respect surely 'it remaineth that they who have wives be as though they had none.' "

The newly wedded pair started off none too well. Wesley, having been the first to break the old rule of the Holy Club that none should marry without counseling with the others, felt called upon to explain his action to his brethren. Charles gives a terse account of his brother's apology, at which, he says, the preachers "hid their faces." The substance of John's remarks was:

That in Oxford [where he had been just before he announced to Charles his intention of marrying] he had an independent fellowship, was universally honoured, but left all for the people's sake; returned to town, took up his cross, and married; that at Oxford he had no more thought of a woman than for any other being; that he married to break down the prejudice about the world and him.

Charles adds that "his easily won lady sat open-eyed." No wonder! The point of John's apology seems to have been that, while at Oxford on a visit, he had been tempted to resume his residence there, as he might under his fellowship. But for the sake of his work he had determined to continue and had decided that he ought to marry for the good of the cause. Marriage involved the resignation of his fellowship and put out of his way all possibility of return to the easy life of Oxford. But what an ex-

INTERLUDE

planation for a bride, to be informed that, two weeks before marriage, her husband had never thought of such a thing, and that he had married her "to break down prejudice about the world and him." The trouble had begun.

A few weeks after the wedding, Wesley wrote his wife, adding an affectionate postscript to the effect that, if letters came addressed to "the Rev. Mr. Wesley," she was to open them. His lady did as she was told, and the amount of her husband's correspondence with other ladies throughout the United Kingdom began to dawn upon her. She at once objected to his correspondence with Sarah Ryan, the housekeeper at Bristol, who may at that time have been regenerate, but who had a past, which included three living husbands. Wesley refused to discontinue this correspondence.

Another item in the sum of their marital unhappiness was the failure of Mrs. Wesley to make a model traveling companion for her husband. This had been one of his first requirements for a wife and one of Grace Murray's excellences. The plight of a merchant's middle-aged widow, used to the peace of Threadneedle Street, in attempting to keep up with the most itinerant man in the British Isles may be glimpsed from the following incidents duly set down in the Journal:

While I was preaching at West Street [London] in the afternoon [the date was March 15, 1752] there was one of

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

the most violent storms I ever remember. In the midst of the sermon great part of a house opposite to the chapel was blown down. We heard a huge noise, but knew not the cause; so much the more did God speak to our hearts; and great was the rejoicing of many in the confidence of His protection. Between four and five I took horse, with my wife and [step-]daughter. The tiles were rattling from houses on both sides; but they hurt not us. We reached Hayes about seven in the evening, and Oxford the next day.

The next month he was mobbed in Hull. While he preached, clods and stones flew about on every side, and, when he had finished, he found that his coachman had driven off.

We were at a loss till a gentlewoman invited my wife and me to come into her coach. She brought some inconvenience on herself thereby, not only as there were nine of us in the coach, three on each side, and three in the middle, but also as the mob closely attended us, throwing in at the windows (which we did not think it prudent to shut) whatever came next to hand. But a large gentlewoman who sat in my lap screened me, so that nothing came near me.

His wife grumbled at such traveling, as one would expect, and Wesley, naturally enough, resented her grumbling at a manner of life which had been his meat and drink for nearly twenty years. Of a journey which he made *without* his wife, he wrote:

In my present journey, I leap as broken from chains. I am content with whatever entertainment I meet with, and my companions are always in good humour, "because they are with me." This must be the spirit of all who take journeys

INTERLUDE

with me. If a dinner ill dressed, or a hard bed, a poor room, a shower of rain, or a dusty road, will put them out of humour, it lays a burthen upon me greater than all the rest put together. By the grace of God, I never fret; I repine at nothing; I am discontented with nothing. And to hear persons at my ear fretting and murmuring at every thing is like tearing the flesh off my bones.

No one will wonder that a marriage between Wesley and Mrs. Vazeille did not succeed; one wonders only that any one thought that it would. Wesley can not be excused from blame. In the first place, he was too old to marry; and in the second, he lacked every requirement for a good husband. Southe may be right in saying that Mrs. Wesley deserves to be placed along with Xantippe and Job's spouse, as one of the three bad wives, but John Wesley deserves the place which some one has given him as one of the world's worst husbands.

For her part, Mrs. Wesley was insanely jealous and capable of almost any meanness. She stole her husband's letters, even interpolating them with passages of questionable import, turning these mangled copies over to the public prints. At least once she attacked her distinguished husband with physical violence. Altogether it is a pitiable story.

In a long letter to his wife,¹ Wesley reviewed, with the inevitable numbered paragraphs, the story of his domestic shipwreck. He did not expect to be able to recall everything, he wrote, since he did not

¹ Given in full in Appendices, see pp. 352-358.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

have his notes and his mind was "not very retentive of evil." Before his marriage he had seen that Mrs. Vazeille was "a well bred woman of great address and a middling understanding." Then one morning after their marriage, he had found her "all thunder and lightning." To soften her temper he had tried everything, argument,—sometimes he "reasoned at large" with her—persuasions, silence. Nothing was of any effect; "one might as well attempt to convince or persuade the north wind." She had quarreled with his brother. She had been jealous of Mrs. Lefevre, "a dove-like woman," with whom he would have been glad to converse "frequently and largely." She had objected to the wife of his friend, Ebenezer Blackwell. She broke into his cabinet, demanded to know every place he went and every person he saw there, and did not scruple to accuse him of adultery. At last he revolted.

"Perceiving you still rose in your demands, I resolved to break this at once, and to shew you I would be my own master, and go where I pleased without asking any one's leave." "You have wronged me much," he continued, "but not beyond forgiveness." Significant of his sentiments is the fact that his closing words were repeated in more than one letter to her:

I love you still, and am as clear from all other women as the day I was born. At length know *me* and know *yourself*. Your enemy I cannot be. But let me be your friend: suspect me no more: asperse me no more: provoke me no more. Do

INTERLUDE

not any longer contend for mastery: for power, money, or praise. Be content to be a private insignificant person, known and loved by God and me. Attempt no more to abridge me of the liberty which I claim by God and man. Leave me to be governed by God and my own conscience: Then shall I govern *you* with gentle sway, and shew that I do indeed love you, even as Christ the Church.

In the first weeks of 1771, Mrs. Wesley left her husband, whose Journal note on the event was nothing if not restrained: "*Non eam reliqui; non dimisi; non revocabo.*"¹ There were temporary reconciliations after that, but no permanent one. On October 8, 1781, Mrs. Wesley died, at the age of seventy-one, after having for thirty years been a constant thorn in the side of the husband who did not hear of her death until several days after she was buried.

¹ "I did not leave her; I did not send her away; I shall not call her back."

CHAPTER IX

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS

THERE were other matters than affairs of the heart to claim Wesley's attention during the ten years after 1750. He moved among people stirred first by the fears that preceded and then by the suspense that followed the beginning of the Seven Years' War; he spoke to crowds excited by news of the fall of Louisburg, the battle of Minden, the attack on Quebec. Among the Methodists themselves, there had arisen differences which taxed the skill and patience of their leader. Yet at no other time during his long life do Wesley's Journal and letters reflect more excursions into curious by-paths or more evidence of his incurable pragmatism.

On February 8, 1750, London was rocked by earthquake shocks. A second disturbance, a month later, roused the city almost to frenzy. A fanatic prophesied that on April 4 another earthquake would destroy half of London. The ensuing excitement was not cooled by sober warnings given out by those who seized the occasion to exhort the wicked. Charles Wesley preached a sermon on "The Cause and Cure of Earthquakes," and followed this

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS

by a pamphlet of hymns suitable for such calamities. Charles was at one with his brother in considering earthquakes as the instruments of God for punishing sin, for John was publicly thankful that the Lord had so lightly warned the people by the first shocks. In this opinion the bishop of London concurred. His Lordship issued a pamphlet, of which sixty thousand were sold, pointing out the wickedness of the people and the possibility of grave judgments coming upon them.

During the three days preceding the fourth of April, the day set apart for the holocaust by the crazy prophet, seven hundred and thirty coaches were counted passing Hyde Park Corner carrying families to the open country. On the night of April 3, every open space in London was filled with people awaiting the end of the world. Many women wore specially prepared gowns, which Horace Walpole called "earthquake gowns." The occasion was made for Whitefield, and at midnight, in Hyde Park, he lifted up his voice in pitch darkness and exhorted shivering multitudes concerning wrath and judgment to come.

The ridicule which sheepish refugees poured out upon Bishop Sherlock after the first fright was over did not change Wesley's mind as to earthquakes. After the great Lisbon disaster in 1755, he issued a tract, "Serious Thoughts on the Lisbon Earthquake," in which he insisted that, irrespective of natural causes, earthquakes are used as a means of

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

divine justice. He added that, if the earthquake did not function, Halley's comet was expected in 1758 and might wreck the world.

In 1753, Wesley was often ill, but he continued to work. On October 22 he rode to Canterbury, although he was "extremely sick." All through the week he complained of sickness. He would have taken some rhubarb, but "had no time, having classes to meet from morning to night." The entry for Thursday, November 8, is: "In the night my disorder returned more violent than it had been since I left Cornwall. I should have taken some ipecacuanha in the morning, but had no time to spare, my business being fixed for every hour till four in the afternoon; and by that time all my complaints were gone, so that I needed only a little food and rest."

His cough and fever increasing, Wesley thought best to write his epitaph "to prevent vile panegyric." Accordingly he composed the following inscription:

Here lieth the Body
of
JOHN WESLEY

A Brand Plucked Out of the Burning
Who Died of a Consumption in the Fifty-First
Year of His Age
Not leaving, After His Debts are Paid,
Ten Pounds Behind Him:

Praying,
God be Merciful to Me, an Unprofitable Servant!

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS

He ordered that this, if any, inscription should be placed on his tombstone.

In Charles's "Journal" the phrase, "a brand plucked out of the burning" was amended by the words, "not once only."

On January 3, 1754, Wesley arrived at Clifton, a suburb of Bristol, to take the cure at the Hot Well. Local tradition in Bristol has it that this was the beginning of the ruin of the Hot Well, for such notoriety came to Clifton, as the result of the evangelist's visit and apparent benefit from the cure, that the place was crowded with visitors. The overjoyed proprietors of the hot wells raised their prices so much that, when the first wave of popularity was over, the patronage dropped off, never to return.

On January 23, 1756, the Tory evangelist happened to be in the robing-room which adjoined the House of Lords when the king, George II, put on his robes.

His brow was much furrowed with age [commented Wesley] and quite clouded with care. And is this all the world can give even to a king? All the grandeur it can afford? A blanket of ermine round his shoulders, so heavy and cumbersome he can scarce move under it! A huge heap of borrowed hair, with a few plates of gold and glittering stones upon his head! Alas, what a bauble is human greatness! And even this will not endure. Cover the head with ever so much hair and gold, yet—

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

*Scit te Proserpina canum;
Personam capit detrahet illa tuo.*

February 6 was a fast-day, appointed because of a threatened French invasion. Wesley noted the words which were used in Jewish synagogues on that day:

Incline the heart of our Sovereign Lord King George, as well as the hearts of his lords and counsellors, to use us kindly, and all our brethren, the children of Israel, that in his days and in our days we may see the restoration of Judah, and that Israel may dwell in safety, and the Redeemer may come to Zion. May it be Thy will!

Wesley's most extended record during the fifties is of his visits to Ireland, but he was also in Scotland and Wales, and his English work included Cornwall and Yorkshire as well as his established headquarters in Bristol and London. Everywhere he had time to visit old buildings, explore natural wonders, inquire about strange occurrences and historic events, and compare the scenery and customs with those he had met elsewhere. To read his Journal is to pass in review the eighteenth century in the two kingdoms.

In Scotland, Wesley was amazed at the difference between conditions and the English report of them. In April, 1753, he stuck in a quagmire in the middle of the highroad on the way to Glasgow, but he could excuse this, "for the road all along, for near fifty miles after, was such as I never saw

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS

any natural road either in England or Ireland: nay, far better, notwithstanding the continued rain, than the turnpike road between London and Canterbury."

Dumfries was "a clean, well-built town, having two of the most elegant churches (one at each end of the town) that I have ever seen. . . . What miserable accounts pass current in England of the inns in Scotland! Yet here, as well as wherever we called in our whole journey, we had not only everything we wanted, but everything readily and in good order, and as clean as I ever desire." At Glasgow, Wesley visited the University, which he thought not larger or handsomer than Lincoln College. "The habit of the students gave me surprise. They wear scarlet gowns, reaching only to their knees. Most I saw were very dirty, some very ragged, and all of very coarse cloth."

At Alnwick, Wesley happened on the day when apprentices were made free of the corporation after completion of their time. "Sixteen or seventeen, we were informed, were to receive their freedom this day; and, in order thereto (such is the unparalleled wisdom of the present corporation, as well as their forefathers), to walk through a great bog (purposely preserved for the occasion, otherwise it might have been drained long ago), which takes up some of them to the neck, and many of them to the breast."

Four years later, Wesley was again in western

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Scotland. This time he went to the new library at the college in Glasgow and saw the collection of pictures. He walked through the old cathedral, which he thought more lofty than Canterbury. From the steeple, he viewed the country: ". . . a more fruitful and better cultivated plain is scarce to be seen in England. Indeed nothing is wanting but more trade (which would naturally bring more people) to make a great part of Scotland no way inferior to the best counties in England."

Wesley thought that Edinburgh's main street (he spoke, of course, of the Old Town) was finer than anything in England. It was broad and finely paved and had "lofty houses on either hand (many of them seven or eight stories high). . . . But how can it be suffered that all manner of filth should be thrown into the street continually? Where are the magistracy, the gentry, the nobility of the land? . . . How long shall the capital city of Scotland, yea, and the chief street of it, stink worse than a common sewer?"

In Holyrood Palace, Wesley was struck by the picture of Mary Queen of Scots. "It is scarce possible for any who looks at this to think her such a monster as some have painted her, nor indeed for any who considers the circumstances of her death, equal to that of an ancient martyr." In 1768, Wesley read a work dealing with the charges usually brought against Mary Stuart and was convinced, if he needed convincing, that Mary was innocent. To

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS

the objection that the character of Mary was generally called in question, he answered that the stories were circulated by Queen Elizabeth's orders. " 'But what, then, was Queen Elizabeth?' As just and merciful as Nero, and as good a Christian as Mahomet."

Various matters relative to conditions in Ireland adorn the Irish journals. He was in Castlebar on the western coast on the occasion of a "remarkable trial." "A Swedish ship, being leaky, put into one of our harbours. The Irish, according to custom, ran to plunder her. A neighbouring gentleman hindered them, and, for so doing, demanded a fourth part of the cargo: and this, they said, the law allows! But where, meantime, is the law of God?"

At Lurgan, in the north of Ireland, Wesley talked with a Mr. Miller, "the contriver of that statue which was at Lurgan when I was there before." Wesley does not say that he ever saw the machine, but he describes it:

It was the figure of an old man standing in a case, with a curtain drawn before him, over against a clock which stood on the other side of the room. Every time the clock struck he opened the door with one hand, drew back the curtain with the other, turned his head as if looking round on the company, and then said, with a clear, loud, articulate voice: "Past one, two, three," and so on. But so many came to see this (the like of which all allowed was not to be seen in Europe) that Mr. Miller was in danger of being ruined, not having time to attend his own business; so, as none

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

offered to purchase it or reward him for his pains, he took the whole machine in pieces; nor has he any thought of ever making anything of the kind again.¹

On the occasion of a later visit, in 1773, Mr. Miller, who seems to have been a gentleman of imagination, soberly assured Wesley that he intended, "if he had life and health, to make two, which would not only speak, but sing hymns alternately with an articulate voice; that he had made a trial and it answered well." He prudently declined to say when it would be finished, as he had other business and could only give his leisure time to the work. Wesley did not proffer financial help, but observed, "How amazing it is that no man of fortune enables him to give all his time to the work!"

Such miscellaneous activities did not preclude from Wesley's mind his one great problem in these years, a question which had been asked much earlier and which was to be with him to the end. Wesley had organized religious societies of such character that their relation to the established church was becoming more and more difficult, and his own loyalty both to the Establishment and to his societies created a dilemma.

The Methodist societies were organized and controlled by the Wesleys, clergymen of the Church of England, and the majority of the members of

¹ Miller was a "respectable woolen draper" ("Methodist Magazine," 1827, p. 801), but I have no further information about his supposed invention.

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS

these societies were at least nominal communicants of that church. But the opposition of bishops and clergy had early driven the Methodists into irregular practices, field preaching, the use of lay preachers, building of chapels. Many times Methodists were repelled from the sacraments, and often they themselves had scruples as to the lawfulness of receiving sacraments from unconverted priests. These conditions moved many of them to look longingly toward separation from the church.

Wesley's helpers were not always without ambition, and a connection with the church, which seemed very desirable to a fellow of Lincoln, held little attraction for men whom the church would not recognize. If Wesley could afford to endure the slights of his equals, his helpers could ill brook the same snubbing from social superiors. As dissenters, recognized nonconformists, they would at least have been free from galling attachment to the church.

The inherent difficulty of keeping Methodists faithful to the church appears more clearly as one looks closely at Wesley's societies. The sole condition of membership was a desire to flee from the wrath to come and to be saved from one's sins. True, Methodists were supposed to use the "means of grace," by which was meant church ordinances and services; but the astounding feature of this requirement, from a churchman's standpoint, was that dissenters might belong to the societies and satisfy the requirements of membership by attend-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

ance upon dissenting services. Wesley's principle was stated plainly:

... We, by the grace of God, hold on our way, being ourselves still members of the Church of England, as we were from the beginning, but receiving all that love God in every Church, as our brother, and sister, and mother. And in order to their union with us, we require no unity in opinions, or in modes of worship, but barely that they "fear God and work righteousness," as was observed. . . . In what Church or congregation beside, throughout the Christian world, can members be admitted upon these terms, without any other conditions?

So concerned was he that his Methodists should have an outlook beyond the boundaries of the church, that he took one evening a month, during a certain period, to read to the society "the accounts I received from time to time of the work which God is carrying on in the earth, both in our own and in other countries, not among us alone, but among those of various opinions and denominations." Wesley always contended that he allowed the greatest liberty of opinion within his societies; but one must interpret this broadly, remembering that the "evangelical" reading of Christianity was presupposed and that Wesley's allowance of difference of opinion did not mean permission for his preachers to disseminate doctrines which were considered erroneous. John Byrom, the poet, once took Wesley to task for turning out of his societies six men, who, so Byrom contended, had been guilty only of reading

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS

the works of the mystic, Jacob Boehme, and of William Law. Wesley's answer was that the men were expelled for lying, that "he rejected them, not for reading the books, which was as indifferent as the colour of their hair, but if they would thrust their hair into other people's eyes, and trouble them with their notions—that was his reason." But essentially the societies rested upon a basis which could not but scandalize High-churchmen and tempt those who would separate from the Establishment. If dissenters could belong to the societies, why should not churchmen be free from the rule of unsympathetic clergymen and polemical bishops?

From the very first, Wesley had valued his conscience above the bishops. In answer to a question from Charles as to what he should do if the bishops should forbid him preaching, John answered, as early as June 28, 1739: ". . . God being my helper, I will obey Him still. And if I suffer for it, His will be done."

But Wesley was emphatic in insisting that the Methodists must remain with the church. In the first conference, 1744, one of the questions proposed was: "Do we separate from the church?" The answer was: "We conceive not: We hold communion therewith for conscience' sake, by constantly attending both the word preached, and the sacraments administered therein." Another question of this first conference was: "Do you not entail a schism on the church? That is, Is it not probable

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

that your hearers, after your death, will be scattered into all sects and parties; or that they will form themselves into a distinct sect?" The answer is characteristic:

- (1) We are persuaded the body of our hearers will even after our death remain in the Church, unless they be thrust out.
- (2) We believe notwithstanding, either that they will be thrust out, or that they will leaven the whole Church.
- (3) We do, and will do, all we can to prevent those consequences which are supposed likely to happen after our death.
- (4) But we cannot with a good conscience neglect the present opportunity of saving souls while we live, for fear of consequences which may possibly or probably happen after we are dead.

As the years went by Charles was more and more perturbed, fearing that his brother would go too far toward dissent. "My chief concern upon earth . . ." so he once told a conference of leaders, "was the prosperity of the Church of England; my next, that of the Methodists; my third, that of the preachers: that, if their interests should ever come into competition, I would give up the preachers for the good of the Methodists, and the Methodists for the good of the whole body of the Church of England. . . ." At another time, he said that he remained with the Methodists, not so much to do good as to prevent evil. He wished to stand in the way of his brother's "violent counsellors." He feared that the tide would

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS

be too strong for him and "bear him away into the gulf of separation." Because of his anxious and officious interest for the church, Charles was disliked by many of the preachers, who saw in him the chief obstacle in the way of their plans for separation.

John Wesley's opinions underwent change through the years. From a High-churchman, believing in the divine right of episcopacy, he became a Low-churchman in his views on church and ministry. The development of his own doctrine as to church and orders need not be detailed here; the subject is a perennial one, particularly with the English Wesleyans, who find it necessary to defend the legitimacy of their church against Anglican assumptions. But John Wesley had been convinced that bishops and elders are of one and the same order, and that episcopacy, while convenient, is not prescribed of necessity in the New Testament. The consequence of this position is the belief that, if expedient, an elder can ordain as well as a bishop, and that obedience to the established order of the Church of England is not a necessity for salvation. Because John Wesley held this reformed view, Charles was convinced, as early as 1754, that his brother was almost ready for separation.

In the years 1755 and 1756 the question of separation was the burning issue. Charles thought all the preachers "in the north" unanimous for separation. But his brother staunchly denied this. "We

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

have not one preacher," he wrote, "who either proposes, or desires, or designs (that I know) to separate from the church at all." He admitted some of the preachers held principles concerning ordination which he could not approve. But as to the future he was pragmatic. In answer to Charles's excited question as to what would be his response when the preachers in Ireland set up for themselves, as Charles was convinced they would shortly do, John Wesley returned the laconic answer, "When." To a clergyman who, like Charles, was worried about what might happen, Wesley responded that he, too, had spent much time in thinking about it, but could come to no decision. "The steps I am now to take are plain," he wrote. "I see broad light shining upon them; but the other part of the prospect I cannot see; clouds and darkness rest upon it. Your general advice on this head, 'To follow my own conscience, without any regard to consequences or prudence, so called,' is unquestionably right, and it is a rule which I have closely followed for many years, and hope to follow to my life's end."

So Wesley went on calmly between two fires. On the one side, Charles and his clerical friends besought him to take some step to insure his followers remaining with the church, in case of their leader's death, which had been expected for several years. On the other side, his preachers urged upon him greater concessions toward dissent. In this direction some of the preachers went so far as to ad-

ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS

minister the sacrament of the Lord's Supper without the authority of episcopal ordination. This they agreed to discontinue, but they maintained the lawfulness of the practice. Wesley, in his course, satisfied neither party.

Apparently only the leader of the Methodists could not or would not see the inevitable. He alone refused to face the real tendencies of his own movement. "It is a purely modern notion," writes an historian of the English Church, "that the Wesleyan movement ever was—or ever was intended to be, except by Wesley—a Church [of England] movement." The exception is significant. Only Wesley thought it possible to create a brotherhood which would transcend denominational differences; only Wesley refused to accept the obvious limitations of ecclesiastical Christianity.

In 1757 Charles Wesley ceased to travel as an itinerant preacher. He settled with his wife, formerly Sarah Gwynne, in Bristol. Various reasons have been given for Charles's action. He continued with his brother in charge of the societies; he was as much a Methodist as he had ever been. His marriage may have had something to do with his decision. So thought one of his friends, Berridge, who contrasted Charles's condition with that of John Wesley and George Whitefield. "No trap so mischievous to the field preacher as wedlock," Berridge wrote to Lady Huntingdon. "Matrimony has quite maimed poor Charles, and might have spoiled

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

John and George, if a wise Master had not graciously sent them a brace of ferrets."

Whatever the reason for Charles's withdrawal from the itinerancy, John Wesley was left the sole itinerant superintendent of the societies. In spite of his perplexities and his disappointment at his brother's retirement, he moved steadily about his work, and the decade ends with a characteristic blending of national and Methodist interests. In November, 1759, Wesley observed in London the General Thanksgiving appointed for the success of British arms at Quebec and Minden, the battles which won Canada and saved Hanover for the English Crown. The day was observed at the Methodist chapel near the Seven Dials with two sermons from John Wesley, who remarked that, perhaps for the first time in the history of Europe, the prayers for such a day included a petition for the enemies of England.

12-12-1940

CHAPTER X

AN ITINERANT MIND



WESLEY'S physical activities were so stupendous that the casual reader of his biography may overlook his intense mental vigor. The restless activity which drove him to Georgia was unsatisfied with a score of years of travel, preaching, and administration. In this orderly opportunist, this evangelistic don, was a full measure of the adventuring spirit which put Sterne to trifling with new prose forms, set Watt to building steam-engines, and sent Cook to the South Seas. Mentally as well as physically, Wesley was an itinerant; the world was his parish. His Journal reflects this roving, curious mind. Theology, politics, literature, folk-lore, wonder-tales jostle each other in the crowded pages. His publications, pamphlets, letters to the newspapers, were on all subjects. A survey of his mental parish is a survey of the intellectual interests of the eighteenth century in England.

A glance at the index of his collected works finds such variety as this: "Remarks on Mr. H.'s Account of the Gento Religion in Hindostan"; "Thoughts upon Baron Montesquieu's 'Spirit of

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

the Laws'"; "Thoughts on the Character and Writings of Mr. Prior"; "Thoughts on the Writings of Baron Swedenborg"; "Remarks on the Count De Buffon's 'Natural History'"; "Remarks upon Mr. Locke's 'Essay on Human Understanding'"; "Remarks on Mr. Bryant's 'Analysis of Ancient Mythology'"; "Thoughts upon Taste"; "Thoughts on the Power of Music"; "A Thought on the Manner of Educating Children"; "Thoughts on Genius"; "Thoughts on Suicide"; "An Account of the Disturbance in my Father's House" (Old Jeffrey, the ghost); "Directions concerning Pronunciation and Gesture." His journals show him continually turning aside to examine some natural wonder or archæological remains. At times he himself tried curious experiments, as when he took a musician with him and observed the effect of music upon the lions in the Tower. His contemporaries wondered at his versatility. When he took dinner with the bishop of Exeter, in 1782, the guests were astonished that the venerable Methodist had investigated the question of Chatterton's authorship of the Rowley papers.

Samuel Wesley had hoped that his son would follow "critical learning." Perhaps he dreamed that John would beget some ponderous volumes such as his own "*Dissertationes ad Librum Jobi.*" But Susannah Wesley better understood her son and recommended "practical divinity." Indeed, John's mind was not that of a scholar, diligently searching

AN ITINERANT MIND

for his facts and patiently studying and comparing his findings. If he understood the experimental method and sometimes used it in reaching or at least in confirming his conclusions, he was yet far from a patient scholar. He himself has best described his own mental processes. In his Journal, on July 3, 1764, he writes:

I was reflecting on an odd circumstance, which I cannot account for. I never relish a tune at first hearing, not till I have almost learned to sing it; and, as I learn it more perfectly, I gradually lose my relish for it. I observe something similar in poetry; yea, in all the objects of the imagination. I seldom relish verses at first hearing; till I have heard them over and over, they give me no pleasure; and they give me next to none when I have heard them a few times more, so as to be quite familiar. Just so a face or a picture, which does not strike me at first, becomes more pleasing as I grow more acquainted with it; but only to a certain point: for when I am too much acquainted, it is no longer pleasing.

This is not the way of "critical learning," but it is the way of that type of mind to which everything new is a challenge to be followed until it is no longer new. Wesley had the mind of the traveler, the explorer; and like many explorers, he often believed as he wanted to believe.

Wesley scoffed at Goldsmith's uncritical belief in the existence of Bishop Pontoppidan's kraken and sea-serpent, the one a mile across and the other raising himself out of the water higher than the mainmast of a man-of-war. But Wesley himself was

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

always open to a good ghost-story. The famous one which came from his father's house had doubtless helped to confirm him in his childhood belief, a belief reinforced by his uncritical assumptions concerning the Bible. Giving up belief in witchcraft, he said, was "in effect giving up the Bible." He could not but wonder at men denying "dogmatically" "what not only the whole world, heathen and Christian, believed in past ages, but thousands, learned as well as unlearned, firmly believe at this day." In the same way, trivial happenings were attributed by him to direct intervention of God, to the scandal of sober churchmen and the later embarrassment of devout biographers. Wesley's explanations of this habit were ingenious if not convincing. He was once lost in the darkness and rain; he prayed for the rain to stop, or for a light, or for an honest guide. Presently he got all three. When accused of claiming this as a miracle, he denied vehemently: the incident was "but a signal instance of God's particular providence over all those who call upon him."

As a good Englishman, Wesley shared many of the robust prejudices of his day. While speaking against persecution and bravely denouncing the Lord Gordon riots, he nevertheless opposed the Toleration Bill, which proposed to remove the disabilities of the Romanists. "I will not," he wrote, "use the sword against them, nor put it into their hands, lest they should use it against me; I wish

AN ITINERANT MIND

them well, but I dare not trust them." In the same way, he shared the feelings of his patriotic fellow-countrymen concerning everything French. Having read Voltaire's "Henriade," he allowed him to be "a perfect master of the French language," but added:

... by him I was more than ever convinced that the French is the poorest, meanest language in Europe; that it is no more comparable to the German or Spanish than a bagpipe is to an organ; and that with regard to poetry in particular, considering the incorrigible uncouthness of their measure, and their always writing in rhyme (to say nothing of their vile double rhymes, nay, and frequent false rhymes), it is as impossible to write a fine poem in French as to make fine music upon a jews'-harp.

Always Wesley's mind was directed by practical interests. A fact was something that could not be explained away, explain it as one might. Indeed, he would accept the most startling explanations if they seemed to justify the fact. In the preface to his "A Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation," he wrote:

It will be easily observed, that I endeavour throughout, not to account for things; but only to describe them. I undertake barely to set down what appears in nature; not the cause of those appearances. The facts lie within the reach of our senses and understanding; the causes are more remote. That things are so, we know with certainty: but why they are so, we know not.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

This truly scientific statement is applicable to his central religious beliefs. He was convinced of the truth of the semi-mystical teachings of the Pietists only by the testimony of those who claimed to have experienced assurance of their personal touch with the Divine. During his active ministry, he carefully gathered biographical accounts of religious experience, until, by the time of his death, he had amassed a unique body of such literature. These accounts were published from time to time, on the principle that such first-hand testimony is far better for all readers than works about religion. More than one book on the psychology of religion has been based upon this source material.

It would be untrue to say that Wesley developed his theology out of this data. When he became theological in thinking or writing he was used to employ the categories of traditional Christian theology, choosing freely, it is true, and sometimes making strange dogmatic bedfellows to lie down together. But when he wrote for the man of the world or spoke to the ignorant, he was unfettered and used words that all men could understand. For this reason, such writings as his "Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion" may be used to-day, while his "Standard Sermons" are perused only by Methodist preachers who are still compelled to read them, with the result that they often go forth believing Wesley a flogger of dead asses and his religion a matter of whereases and thereforees. His

AN ITINERANT MIND

true theological emphasis, as has been well said, was upon three things: moral idealism, certainty, and "his universal appeal to mankind to believe in God as Infinite Love."

As for his technical theological treatises and his theological controversies, are they not written in all the "lives" of Wesley? He who cares to wade through them will find much refreshment, if his soul longs for dreary arguments on "Original Sin," "Predestination," and "Free Grace." But even in argument Wesley sometimes swerves with lightness or parries his opponent's thrust with grace. Against such opponents as the Rev. Augustus Toplady, author of the hymn, "Rock of Ages," and of much scurrility and low abuse, Wesley retained his dignity, and the character of his tracts stands out against the personal slander of much of the theological controversy of the period. Yet Wesley's very self-restraint was better calculated to exasperate his opponents than much railing.

When Toplady wrote at length in favor of the doctrine of predestination, Wesley summed up his opponent's belief with a terseness that put the reverend author beside himself with rage: "The sum of all is this: One in twenty (suppose) of mankind are elected; nineteen in twenty are reprobated. The elect shall be saved, do what they will; The reprobate shall be damned, do what they can. Reader, believe this, or be damned. Witness my hand. A—T—." Toplady's friend, Rowland Hill, editor of a

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

"religious" paper called the "Review," abused Wesley shamefully. Wesley replied at length, and at the end deplored Hill's manner. "How is it," asked Wesley, "that as soon as a man comes to the knowledge of the truth, it spoils his temper?" Hill, formerly an amiable man, is now "violent, impetuous, bitter of spirit! in a word, the author of the *Review!*" But Wesley did not always deal in soft answers. His opponents had been quick to see that, when Wesley reprinted Bunyan's "Holy War," he left out that worthy's Calvinism. They immediately accused him of having "disemboweled" poor John Bunyan to make him look like Wesley. No, said Wesley, Bunyan was abridged to fit into the scheme of the publications in which he was included. "However," he retorted, "those that are fond of his bowels may put them in again, and swallow them as they would the trail of a woodcock."

To tell the truth, Wesley rather enjoyed a good controversy. He had learned to love it in a university where men still learn by disputing. He thanked God that at Lincoln, as moderator in the disputations which were held there six times a week, he learned the "honest art" of arguing. And he observed with more truth than modesty: "At doing this, I bless God, I am expert; as those will find who attack me without rhyme or reason." Wesley answered his critics in good eighteenth-century fashion, paragraph by paragraph, stopping occasionally to criticize their use of a word or to raise an eye-

AN ITINERANT MIND

brow at their constructions, and often ending with a word of advice as to the spirit and method best adapted to such debate. Altogether he was perhaps the most maddening, if not the ablest, of those who in that contentious age deluged the booksellers with inky divinity.

Wesley's literary taste was determined mainly by his youthful training and by his moral interests. As an Oxonian, he had reveled in light literature, especially in plays. Such reading he later bemoaned as a sinful waste of time, but as he grew older, his catholic taste again prevailed. He was always a stern critic of any immoral tendencies in literature, but his reading was wider than the lesser minds of his helpers could understand. To his niece Sally, he recommended a course of reading which included the "Faerie Queene," "select parts of Shakespeare, Fairfax, or Hoole, 'Godfrey of Bouillon,' 'Paradise Lost,' the 'Night Thoughts,' and Young's moral and sacred poems."

Mention of Young recalls the popularity of the melancholy poets among the Methodists. Blair, Graves, and Young were quoted at great length, until a scoffer said that these poets little dreamed when they wrote, that they were composing verses for the Methodists. In this, however, the Methodists shared the taste of the age. Wesley himself admired the classics and quoted Greek and Latin on all occasions, as did all the university men of his day; but he thought Goldsmith a fine writer, ad-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

mired Dr. Johnson, and was impressed with McPherson's "Fingal" when it was palmed off as an ancient Northern saga. He read "Fingal" through twice, and concluded it to be genuine and second only to Virgil and Homer.

Matthew Prior, a friend of Samuel Wesley the younger, was one for whom John Wesley had great esteem. He quoted him on many occasions and wrote a defense of his poetry. In this essay, Wesley judged Prior superior to Pope in "natural understanding," believing that those lines which the poet polished carefully are not inferior to "anything that has been wrote either by Pope, or Dryden, or any English poet, except Milton." His opinions fluctuated, it would seem; for nearly twenty years before, he had written:

I was myself once much fonder of Prior than of Pope; as I did not then know that stiffness was a fault. But what in all Prior can equal, for beauty of style, some of the first lines that Pope ever published?

Wesley was particularly interested in history, and did not confine himself to ecclesiastical lines. In his recommendations to his niece he included a rather heavy diet of historical writings: "You may begin with Rollin's 'Ancient History,'" he wrote the young lady, "and afterwards read, in order, the concise 'History of the Church,' Burnet's 'History of the Reformation,' the concise 'History of England,' Clarendon's 'History of the Rebellion,'

AN ITINERANT MIND

Neal's 'History of the Puritans,' his 'History of New England,' and Robertson's 'History of America.'

The concise histories mentioned in the letter were compiled by Wesley himself. As usual, he objected to verbose works and therefore undertook to abridge and popularize Mosheim's "Ecclesiastical History" and to compile a history of England. This latter he took largely from Rapin, Goldsmith, and Smollett. Much of the material in histories, he contended, was of no more importance than news that a bird had dropped a feather on one of the "Pyrenean Mountains." He desired, too, to accustom his readers to seeing the hand of God in history, and, one must add, he also desired to propagate his own ideas about certain historical characters. He adopted "revisionist" views concerning Richard III and Mary Queen of Scots, and hoped to do justice to "those greatly injured characters." His histories were not successful, and an early biographer cumbrously explains that "the too great confidence he had in the authority of his own assertions . . . in some degree indisposed him to enter into that detail of evidence from facts, so highly necessary to establish a general principle in history and biography."

Wesley's delicate health in his youth and young manhood early directed his attention to medicine. The Journal records several severe illnesses, notably

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

those in Bristol in 1741 and in London in 1753. But Wesley's interest in medicine went far beyond his own case. In almost all of his journeys he prescribed for sick Methodists. This was in accord with tradition, as the example of Richard Baxter and the advice of George Herbert, in the seventeenth century, testify, but Wesley's interest naturally enough expressed itself in an evangelistic manner. What he himself believed to be worth while, he felt impelled to pass on to others.

His principal effort in this line was the publication of his "Primitive Physick; or, an Easy and Natural Method of Curing Most Diseases," to which he prefixed the characteristic motto: *Homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto.* The first edition of this work was printed in 1747. The year that the author died, the twenty-third edition came from the press. At various times during these forty-three years, it was revised and enlarged. This book Wesley commended to his congregations, advising the societies in Bristol, for example, that if they had any regard for their bodies or their children, they should have a copy in every house.

"Primitive Physick" was an outgrowth of the dispensary which Wesley instituted in 1746. "For six or seven and twenty years," he explained, "I had made anatomy and physic the diversion of my leisure hours; though I never properly studied them, unless for a few months when I was going to America, where I imagined I might be of some service to

those who had no regular physician among them." When he established his dispensary in London Wesley employed an apothecary and an experienced surgeon, and resolved not to go out of his depth, "but to leave all difficult and complicated cases to such physicians as the patients should choose." But he did not usually think highly of physicians. Four months after he opened the dispensary he wrote to Archbishop Secker that for more than twenty years he had had numberless proofs "that regular physicians do exceeding little good." An exception was made in the case of those whom he regarded as honest as well as skilful, concerning whom he quoted Ben-Sirach (*Ecclesiasticus xxxvii, 1, 2*): "Honour the physician, for God hath appointed him." ✓

Wesley's medical knowledge and practice must be judged in the light of his purpose and times. He was a confessed amateur and had the amateur's ignorant scorn of the professional. But he was moved by the misery of people in the poorer sections of London and in remote country districts, all suffering for lack of medical care. To quote again from his letter to Archbishop Secker: ✓

Now, ought I to have let one of these poor wretches perish, because I was not a regular physician? to have said, "I know what will cure you; but I am not of the college; you must send for Dr. Mead [the most distinguished and socially prominent physician of the day]?" Before Dr. Mead had come in his chariot, the man might have been in his coffin. And when the doctor was come, where was his fee? What! he cannot

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

live upon nothing! So, instead of an orderly cure, the patient dies; and God requires his blood at my hands.

"Primitive Physick" contains 725 prescriptions for 243 diseases. Many of the remedies would startle a modern reader. One finds such recommendations as this: for "a consumption," "take a cow-heel from the Tripe-house ready drest, two quarts of new milk, two ounces of Hartshorn shavings, two ounces of Isinglass, a quarter of a pound of Sugar-candy, and a Race of Ginger. Put all these in a Pot; and set them in an Oven after the Bread is drawn. Let it continue there 'till the Oven is near cold; and let the Patient live on this." Most of his prescriptions, however, are simpler, as when, for "Raging Madness," he advises "let him eat nothing but apples for a month."

The real merit of Wesley's medical advice is found not in his specific remedies, but in his attitude toward medicine. One can, indeed, hardly quarrel with his drugs, remembering that heterogeneous compounds of from twenty to seventy ingredients were not unknown to the apothecaries, and that the "London Pharmacopœia" of 1721, the official drugists' directions issued by the College of Physicians, contained as ingredients in certain formulæ "dogs' excrement, earthworms, and moss from the human skull." In his preface, Wesley inveighs against "compound medicines, consisting of so many ingredients that it was scarce possible for common

people to know which it was that wrought the cure." "The common method of compounding and decomposing medicines," he contended, "can never be reconciled to common sense. Experience shows that one thing will cure most disorders, at least as well as twenty put together. Then why do you add the other nineteen? Only to swell the apothecary's bill: Nay, possibly, on purpose to prolong the distemper, that the doctor and he may divide the spoil."

Physicians of the eighteenth century were given to seeking after "complete theoretical systems" in which mathematics, mechanics, even astronomy played a part. Against these tendencies a few great names in the later seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries can be quoted. Thomas Sydenham (1624-1689) was not a thorough-going empiric, but he set his face away from theoretical systems in the direction of a return to nature. In Holland, Hermann Boerhaave (1668-1738) became the founder of a school of medicine which followed the more or less empirical methods of Sydenham. Lesser names could be mentioned, two of whom are referred to by Wesley. The subject is important here for one reason: an amateur and popularizer in any field is to be judged largely by the authorities whom he follows. A quotation from Wesley's preface will make clear his own position:

Yet there have not been wanting from time to time, some lovers of mankind, who have endeavoured (even contrary to

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

their own interest) to reduce physic to its antient standard: Who have laboured to explode out of it all hypotheses, and fine spun theories, and to make it a plain intelligible thing, as it was in the beginning: Having no more mystery in it than this, "Such a medicine removes such a pain." . . .

Even in the last age there was something of this kind done, particularly by the great and good Dr. Sydenham: And in the present, by his pupil Dr. Dover, who has pointed out simple medicines for many diseases. And some such may be found in the writings of the learned and ingenious Dr. Cheyne. . . .

Wesley's authorities were good, although he, as many popularizers, assumed a simplicity which does not exist, and reduced medicine to an empiric science, indeed: "such a medicine removes such a pain." His guides were men who were moving slowly in the direction which medicine was to take in the century of Lister and Pasteur.

The last name mentioned in the quotation above is that of Dr. George Cheyne, of Bath, two of whose books influenced Wesley's health habits in no small degree. Wesley wrote to his mother in 1724 concerning Cheyne's "Book of Health and Long Life," in which health was referred mainly to temperance and exercise. In the same year Wesley read Cheyne's "Natural Method of Curing Disease" and admired it, although he doubted that it would influence an epicure, since Cheyne talked "against good eating and drinking." From Cheyne, Wesley abstracted most of his rules for health to which he

AN ITINERANT MIND

gave first place in "Primitive Physick." These rules recommend cleanliness of person and surroundings, light and careful eating, water-drinking, avoidance of liquors both strong and malt—"except clear small beer, of a due age," disuse of coffee and tea by nervous persons, walking as the best exercise, few clothes, cold bathing, avoidance of passions, and—the love of God. His rules of health possibly neutralized some of his remedies.

In the preface to the 1760 edition of "Primitive Physick," Wesley recommended electricity as "the nearest an universal medicine, of any yet known in the world." This remedy appears throughout later editions. Even for "Old Age" along with the use of tar-water¹ and "decoction of nettles," he advised: "be electrified daily." The mention of electricity introduces other scientific fields into which Wesley entered as intrepidly as into that of medicine.

As early as 1747 Wesley went to see "the electrical experiments" and reported his astonishment at seeing a flame issue from his finger, "real flame, such as sets fire to spirits of wine." At this time, "electrical machines" were being carried over England for the purpose of demonstrating to the curious the method of generating and storing electricity which had become famous as the result of the experiments of Dutch scholars at Leyden. Popular

¹ Tar-water was Bishop Berkeley's panacea which he advocated in "Philosophical Reflexions and Inquiries concerning the Virtues of Tar-Water," published in 1744.

interest was reflected in articles and letters which appeared in the public prints, and possible medicinal use of the new discovery was early debated. A letter in the Gentleman's Magazine for May, 1747, tells of a reported cure of a rheumatic pain by electrification, and adds, "Who knows what farther experiments and discoveries such an incident may lead to?" The letter is signed "J. W." Wesley himself followed Benjamin Franklin's publications on electricity with much interest. These were originally sent to London in letters to Peter Collinson, an American merchant and member of the Royal Society, but the Society did not think them worthy of inclusion in their published transactions. They were at last published in England by Cave, editor of the Gentleman's Magazine.

Wesley's interests were primarily practical. He was curious and always willing to read any one's theory, but his reply to a question in one of his conferences defines the scope of his major enthusiasm: "Why did you meddle with electricity? For the same reason as I published the 'Primitive Physick' —to do as much good as I can."

In 1756 Wesley set up an electrical machine, not for experiment but for medical purposes. Two or three years afterward, the patients were so numerous that they were divided, and "part were electrified in Southwark, part at the Foundery, others near St. Paul's, and the rest near the Seven Dials." In 1760 he published "The Desideratum;

AN ITINERANT MIND

or, Electricity Made Plain and Useful. By a Lover of Mankind and of Common Sense." Half of this work was taken up with accounts of experiments and theories concerning electricity, half with accounts of cases of ailments relieved by application of the newly discovered power. His work was taken, he said, from what had been published on the subject by "Mr. Franklin, Mr. Hoadly, Mr. Wilson, Watson, Lovett, Freke, Martin, Watkins, and in the monthly magazines." For the speculative part, he was chiefly indebted to Franklin, and for the practical part, to Lovett, although he did not subscribe to everything that they said.

For the understanding of Wesley's general scientific position, one must turn primarily to "A Survey of the Wisdom of God in the Creation: or, a Compendium of Natural Philosophy." This was first published in 1763 in two volumes. In 1770 a new edition was published in three volumes, while the third edition, published in 1777, contained five volumes.

The object of this work was stated in the preface to the first edition:

I have long desired to see such a Compendium of Natural Philosophy, as was, 1. Not too diffuse, not expressed in many words. . . . 2. Not maimed or imperfect, but containing the heads of whatever (after all our discoveries) is known with any degree of certainty, either with regard to the Earth or the Heavens. And this I wanted to see, 3. In the plainest dress; simply and nakedly exprest, in the most clear, easy,

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

and intelligible manner, that the nature of the things would allow: particularly free from all the jargon of Mathematics, which is mere Heathen Greek to common Readers. At the same time I wished to see this short, full, plain account of the visible Creation, directed to its right end: not barely to entertain an idle, barren curiosity; but to display the invisible things of God, his Power, Wisdom and Goodness.

Such a treatise Wesley had been unable to find in English, and had therefore turned to foreign sources. He found what he wanted in the Latin work of Johann Franz Buddeus. Buddeus (1667-1729) was professor of philosophy in Jena after 1705, a celebrated theologian of his day who wrote in several fields. Wesley took his work, but "found occasion to retrench, enlarge, or alter every Chapter, and almost every Section. . . . So that [he added] it is now I believe, not only pure, containing nothing false or uncertain; but as full as any Tract can be expected to be, which is comprised in so narrow a compass: and likewise plain, clear, and intelligible to one of a tolerable understanding."

In the preface to his third edition, Wesley wrote that he had finished his revision before he saw Oliver Goldsmith's "History of the Earth and Animated Nature." "I had not read over the first volume of this," he continued, "when I almost repented of having wrote anything on the head." His opinion of Goldsmith was high: "He was a person of strong judgment, of a lively imagination,

AN ITINERANT MIND

and a master of language; both of the beauty and strength of the English tongue."

Nevertheless, Wesley objected to many things in Goldsmith's book. The author spent too much time on animals commonly known, which can be "at least useful only to the Booksellers, by swelling the bulk, and consequently the price of his book." The work was too large and expensive. Wesley thought his own sources more abundant than Goldsmith's, but he found the latter's accounts sometimes more accurate than his own; so he had substituted passages from Goldsmith, only abbreviating as space demanded. Besides, Wesley inserted "several of his [Goldsmith's] beautiful remarks, such as directly tended to illustrate that great truth, O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all."

In the fourth volume of the third edition, Wesley added an abridgment of Charles Bonnet's "Contemplation of Nature," which had appeared in Amsterdam in 1764 and in England in translation in 1766. In the fifth volume were extracts from "Enquiry into the Origins of the Discoveries Attributed to the Moderns," by Deutens. An appendix contained a study of the human understanding after Peter Browne, Bishop of Cork.

The "Compendium" was designed to cover all branches of natural science, and the headings of the main sections show that this purpose was car-

ried out. The various books are entitled: "Of Man," "Of Brutes," "Of Plants," and "Of Natural Bodies," to which were added abridgments of the dissertations referred to above. The introduction surveys the progress of science, referring especially to new discoveries and inventions. Among these are listed the discovery in medicine of the circulation of the blood, of the lacteal veins, of the thoracic duct, and of the possibility of transfusion of blood. In the organic world, the discovery of variations of the lodestone is mentioned, along with the invention or development of the microscope, barometer, thermometer, air-pump, diving-bell, the telescope, and a "diving-machine," "a kind of boat, which is so contrived as to be navigated under water." Along with these discoveries and inventions, which represent very fairly the major scientific accomplishments of Wesley's day, there are set down as true certain of the current misconceptions of his time. He records, for example, the contemporary doctrine of spontaneous generation, a theory which held the field until the early nineteenth century proved the opposing theorem, that all life comes from life. He also explained the revolution of the earth as being caused by the action of the sun's rays in striking the surface of the earth obliquely, as the wind strikes the sails of a windmill.

This is only to say that Wesley made no original contribution to science. But he faithfully recorded the opinions of those whom he considered the best

guides, and it is to his credit that his judgment, in general, has been justified by history. Needless to say, the "Compendium" is of no value now, for, as always, Wesley was writing for his own audience and for a very practical purpose. He interjected remarks of his own, sometimes with his tongue in his cheek, and sometimes in his earnestness forgetting his humor. He admired the adaptability of Nature. "Nor is it an uncommon thing to see the favourite lap-dog fed out of the same bowl of milk, which is prepared for the heir of a wealthy family, but which nature originally designed to nourish a calf." Or again, he noticed a story of a man in Bristol who was reputed to chew the cud. "What a mercy is it," exclaimed Wesley, "that we have not more such instances! For how much of our precious time would it consume!"

A section of the "Compendium" which has been much quoted in recent years is that in which Wesley abridged Bonnet's exposition of the doctrine of the Universal Chain of Being—*Scala Naturæ*. This passage is often quoted as an evidence that Wesley, thirty-two years before Darwin's birth, had foreshadowed the evolutionary theory of the development of life. On the other hand, one writer, who really has some understanding of the true meaning of the "chain of being," cites this as an "anti-evolutionary" doctrine, remarking, somewhat naïvely, that it is doubtful if Wesley had ever heard of the theory of evolution. The notoriety which

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

has been given these quotations makes it worth while to quote more of the section than is ordinarily given and to point out the real significance of the statements included from Bonnet.

Wesley's own statement of the doctrine of *Scala Naturæ* is as follows:

The whole progress of nature is so gradual, that the entire chasm from a plant to man, is filled up with divers kinds of creatures, rising one above another, by so gentle an ascent, that the transitions from one species to another, are almost insensible. And the intermediate space is so well husbanded, that there is scarce a degree of perfection which does not appear in some.

Bonnet explained the idea more at length:

Between the lowest and highest degrees of corporeal and spiritual perfection, there is an almost infinite number of intermediate degrees. The result of these degrees composes the *universal* chain. This unites all beings, connects all worlds, comprehends all spheres. One SOLE BEING is out of this chain, and that is He that made it.

There are no sudden changes in nature; all is gradual, and elegantly varied. There is no being which has not either above or beneath it some that resemble it in certain characters, and differ from it in others.

Among these characters which distinguished beings, we discover some that are more or less general. Whence we derive our distributions into classes, genera, and species. But there are always between two classes, and two like genera, *mean* productions, which seem not to belong more to one than to the other, but to connect them both.

The polypus links the vegetable to the animal. The flying

AN ITINERANT MIND

squirrel unites the birds to the quadrupeds. The ape bears affinity to the quadruped and the man.

In another place, discussing the progression of beings from the lowest up through the highest animals to man, there is the often-quoted passage:

By what degrees does nature raise herself up to man? How will she rectify this head that is always inclined towards the earth? How change these paws into flexible arms? What method will she make use of to transform these crooked feet into supple and skilful hands? Or how will she widen and extend this contracted stomach? In what manner will she place the breasts, and give them a roundness suitable to them?

The ape is this rough draught of man: this rude sketch; an imperfect representation, which nevertheless bears a resemblance to him, and is the last creature that serves to display the admirable progression of the works of God.

This theory of a universal chain of being, so well stated in Bonnet's work, was enunciated chiefly by Bonnet in Geneva and by the Count de Buffon and Lamarck in France. The last named later rejected the doctrine. As to this theory's relations to the later doctrine of evolution, three points must be kept in mind. The observations upon which the chain-of-being theory was based were superficial. It was the naturalist Cuvier who later proposed grouping animals on the basis of comparative anatomy. In the second place, family relations and groupings of species were largely ignored, on the presumption that all life was connected in linear fashion from

the simplest to the most complicated forms. Finally, this theory held rigidly to the immutability of species; there was no thought of the evolution of one species from another.

There is, however, no point in speaking of *scala naturæ* as an anti-evolutionary theory. The theory of evolution, as we know it, was simply non-existent in Wesley's day, and the chain-of-being conception was one of the many preliminary stages of scientific theory on the way to the nineteenth century's favourite hypothesis. In his own day, Wesley adopted and set forth the theory which seemed to him the most brilliant generalization, which seemed to him most to glorify God. If there be an endless chain of being, he asked, does it not include supernatural beings as well as natural ones? He quoted with approval John Locke's argument that there are doubtless more species above us than below us. The conception of a scale of being fitted into his scheme because it served the end for which he wrote his book, "to display the invisible things of God, his Power, Wisdom and Goodness." As to his possible reactions to the theory of evolution, a theory which had not been promulgated in his day, this question must be left to the sons of the prophets. All that any sober reader of Wesley's "Compendium" can say is that he adopted, with his usual facility, a hypothesis which appealed to his own sense of fitness, and to his imagination.

CHAPTER XI

FIFTY YEARS OF ENGLAND ✓

STUDENTS who follow the course of English history during the eighteenth century become aware of far-reaching changes which come more clearly to notice as the third quarter of the century draws to a close. Looking backward, the historian recognizes these changes as having foreshadowed the birth of the modern world, for to them the eighteenth century, so long abused as a dreary waste among otherwise fruitful centuries, is "an Era of New Departure." No little of the importance of the man who is the subject of this volume lies in the fact that he was in spirit and practice a man of the new world but then coming to birth.

When John Wesley was born, England was a sleepy kingdom officially united not even with Scotland. When Wesley died, the British Empire was far on its destined way; if the Thirteen Colonies had been lost, India, Nova Scotia, and Canada were incontestably British. When Wesley was born, England was indeed a nation of shopkeepers; when the evangelist died, his country was the one indus-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

trial nation in a new world which was to be predominantly industrial. In the year 1703, the entire population of England did not equal that of modern London, and that population was centered primarily in the agricultural districts of the South. In 1791, when Wesley died, the population was leaping forward at a rate to frighten Malthusian minds, and sleepy villages were giving way to great cities, principally in the Midlands and the North, Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Birmingham. Even more important to remember are the intellectual changes which took place in these eventful years. In the first days of Queen Anne, the medieval conception of a regulated world was yet the ruling idea of commerce, of government, of literature, of religion. In the days of George III, "freedom" was the watchword of business and government, individualism was the new and insistent note of literature and religion.

How Wesley fitted into this changing scene may well be studied from the vantage-point of the sixth and seventh decades of the century; for these decades saw the rise or development of the new movements in government, business, agriculture, population, literature, and religion. In 1763 the Treaty of Paris was signed, concluding the Seven Years' War and guaranteeing to England her conquests in America and India. From 1767 to 1779 came the three inventions which were to revolutionize the textile industry, Hargreaves' spinning-jenny, Ark-

FIFTY YEARS OF ENGLAND

wright's water-frame, Crompton's "mule." In 1765, Watt produced his first steam-engine.

Industrial changes during the last quarter of the century were to transform even the appearance of England. The "dark, Satanic mills," which Blake and Ruskin were to hate, were springing up where had been only peaceful villages or unspoiled meadows. Cities grew where raw material could be had, for the new factory system required the presence of large numbers of laborers. The enclosure of common fields had been going on rapidly since the fifties because of changed agricultural methods which were making capitalistic farming profitable; and dispossessed cottagers were straggling into the new industrial towns to get work in the dark, ill-ventilated factories. The price which England was to pay for her industrial greatness was the wretchedness of cottagers despoiled of ancient rights to pig and cow and common, and misery and vice in the overcrowded cities where drink, disease, and poverty combined to create the shambles of Hogarth's pictures.

With economic change involving the breakdown of the old order went a change in men's minds. Voices were raised praising personal liberty as the only good gift of government; there were rumors that all men are created free and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. By 1776, the American colonies had formulated the political consequences of these beliefs in an historic docu-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

ment, while in the same year, an English economist, Adam Smith, published an almost equally momentous statement of their economic bearing. During these decades poets were beginning to revolt against the common sense and correctness of the Augustan Age; for the movement which brought back "warmth and colour" into English letters was essentially an individualistic protest on the part of those who were not afraid even of their own emotions. The modern world was to be ruled by modern men.

To all these changes the church was singularly unresponsive. Until after the American Revolution, the colonies were under the religious direction of the Bishop of London, who added to his already heavy duties a desultory oversight of regions with which he was in no wise familiar. The Church of England made little effort to reach the groups of people driven to the cities by enclosures of farm-lands or deprived of their livelihood by the factories. New cities in the industrial district received scant attention. Under the Whig bishops the church had become an adjunct of the state, a consummation for which the great church lawyer, Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London (1723-1748), labored with uncommon zeal. Purged of her most zealous element by the secession of the non-jurors in the first part of the century, the church was finally cleansed of all but a parlor Jacobitism and made an innocuous branch of the government. As a result, re-

FIFTY YEARS OF ENGLAND

ligious zeal was minimized and political conformity exalted. The sentiment of many churchmen was that of Matthew Green "of the Custom-house,"

But to avoid religious jars
The laws are my expositors,
Which in my doubting mind create
Conformity to Church and State.

No more than his contemporaries did John Wesley appreciate the full significance of the changes which were going on about him; one would hardly expect him to produce doctrinaire discussions of, say, an economic movement which was not named until a century later. But there are ample evidences that he was aware of what was happening. In his writings, especially in his pamphlets on "the state of the nation," contemporary England is seen through the eyes of the man who perhaps knew it better than any other in the kingdoms. He had, as he himself said, "such opportunities of being informed as few persons in England have; as I see almost all the large towns in the kingdom, once in two years at least, and can therefore make those inquiries on the spot, as minutely as I please." If sometimes his description does not fit into modern reconstructions of history, his testimony is all the more valuable.

In 1773 Wesley deplored the starving of many people throughout the Isles, attributing the scarcity of provisions to several causes. Among these causes

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

were distilling, luxury, and monopolies of farm-lands. Squeezing out of small landowners was, he thought, "perhaps as mischievous a monopoly as was ever introduced into these kingdoms." But economic depression was a passing phase according to Wesley's testimony, for, a few years later, he wrote in most complimentary language of the prosperity of England.

His own observations convinced him of the falsity of that strange delusion which haunted so many minds during the latter part of the century, the delusion that England's population was declining. In 1778 Wesley expressed his opinion that the population had not grown less since 1759, and added: "I cannot but think there has been, within twenty years, an increase of more than an hundred thousand, in six cities and towns only; I mean, in London, Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, and Liverpool." This increase, contrary to much contemporary and modern belief, was not confined to the towns. Houses were being built and the countryside improved. Wesley was little impressed with Goldsmith's lachrymose lines about sweet Auburn: "I read," commented the Methodist, "in a very beautiful poem, of a 'deserted'—what? province? county? metropolis? No—'village,' somewhere on the Wiltshire Downs! ¹ Yet not quite deserted; for a gentleman who lives there informs me, he can-

¹ Modern scholars usually locate Goldsmith's "Sweet Auburn" in Ireland.

FIFTY YEARS OF ENGLAND

not learn it has had more inhabitants within these hundred years than it has at this day."

Progress in agriculture, manufactures, roads, and canals is constantly referred to in the Journal. One instance will illustrate. In 1774, two months before James Watt came there with his steam-engine, Wesley visited the Boulton iron-works, at Soho. The works Wesley thought to be "wonderfully ingenious, but the greater part of them wonderfully useless." Eight years later he was much impressed by the "high degree of perfection" which Boulton—he does not mention Watts—had reached in his foundry, which at that time employed about five hundred men, women and children.

Far more important than any passing references to contemporary conditions is the way in which Wesley sought to meet what he conceived to be the needs of his time. His relations to the colonists may be dismissed for the moment while his work at home is called to mind. If one should plot the Methodist advance in England during Wesley's lifetime, the resultant map would be found to coincide with the shifts in population and the industrial changes of the period. The triangle which is formed by the three major points of Wesley's labors in England, London, Bristol, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, incloses the chief industrial section of the country. For over a half-century this man's work was centered in territory which was destined to be the heart of the industrial world. Methodist historians have plausibly

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

explained this remarkable fact, as Wesley himself would unquestionably have done, by giving the credit to Providence.

Wherever he worked Wesley strove first to save men's souls, then to save their bodies. The Holy Club had made much of charity, education, and personal ministration to the sick or imprisoned. When the first strictly Methodist societies were organized, it was required that those who retained membership in them should justify the same by "doing good to the bodies of men." In 1730 young Wesley was moved by the distress in Oxford, and he began depriving himself in order that he might have money to give away. Among other things, he wore his hair long to avoid the expense of the elaborate hairdressing expected of a gentleman. His own statement concerning his personal practice was as follows: "One of them [the Oxford Methodists, and he means himself] had thirty pounds a year. He lived on twenty-eight and gave away forty shillings. The next year, receiving sixty pounds, he still lived on twenty-eight and gave away two-and-thirty. The third year he received ninety pounds, and gave away sixty-two. The fourth year he received a hundred and twenty pounds. Still he lived as before on twenty-eight and gave to the poor ninety-two." This must be appreciated with the fact in mind that Wesley was of an extravagant family, and that he himself, in his early years at college, showed marked

symptoms of the family trait. In later years, Wesley received much from his books, although his own salary of sixty pounds a year was often in arrears. But his charities were always equal to, and sometimes in excess of his income. His friend Henry Moore estimated that in fifty years Wesley gave away more than thirty thousand pounds. The charity which Wesley practised himself he enjoined upon his followers. They were to make all they could, save all they could, give all they could.

In addition to his charities, Wesley attempted a more constructive philanthropy. His best efforts were in the dispensaries and the lending fund. The latter was a fund, ranging from thirty to one hundred and twenty pounds, which for more than twenty years was administered for the relief of workmen who would otherwise have been forced to pledge their tools, and for the help of worthy tradesmen in need of immediate assistance. The money was lent without interest, usually upon the indorsement of some worthy man, and was to be repaid week by week within three months. There is little information as to the extent of this philanthropy, but an account of one conspicuous instance of its usefulness is preserved in the "Confessions" of the printer, James Lackington. In his "Memoirs," Lackington spoke in no kindly way of the Methodists, but he later admitted that his success had been due to help which he received from them.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

This success was not small, since Lackington had an income of five thousand pounds and sold one hundred thousand volumes annually.

At Bristol, Kingswood, London, Leytonstone, and Dublin, Wesley inaugurated schools for the children of the poor. These were carried on according to his notions of child life; and he was at one with his age in supposing that children were, in the phrase of a later time, "little men and women." He himself had been impressed by the strict discipline of his mother and her orderly instruction. Besides, his theory of the guilt of all men in their "natural" state made him regard moral education as a very difficult and serious affair. Therefore, the children were forbidden to play and urged to duplicate their elders' conversion experience. As for their textbooks, Wesley wrote the grammars and edited all the others, in order that the children might not be polluted by immodest or profane language. Little can be said as to the efficiency of these schools beyond the remark that "the crude character of educational method was probably no worse than that of most of the schools of the time."

Wesley's institutions designed to relieve distress were paralleled by other institutions in the eighteenth century. The lending fund, the dispensaries, the schools were all duplicated by various organizations, and there is little reason to assign originality to Wesley in any of these. His significance for English philanthropy in this period lies largely in the

FIFTY YEARS OF ENGLAND

fact that he made such work an integral part of the program of his societies. What the Church of England left to the state and to voluntary societies, Wesley made central in his own labors. Moreover, the work was carried on largely by the classes in actual touch with conditions demanding relief. ✓

Wesley laid great stress upon personal ministry to the poor, and organized in his societies a corps of Visitors of the Sick. The rules governing them will show the character of training which the visitors themselves received: ✓

But it may not be amiss, usually, to begin with inquiring into their outward condition. You may ask, Whether they have the necessaries of life? Whether they have sufficient food and raiment? If the weather be cold, Whether they have fuel? Whether they have needful attendance? Whether they have proper advice, with regard to their bodily disorder, especially if it be of a dangerous kind? . . . ✓

Together with the more important lessons which you endeavour to teach all the poor whom you visit, it would be a deed of charity to teach them two things more, which they are generally little acquainted with: industry and cleanliness. ✓

Thus people were taught to relieve the wants of their own class, and one may speculate as to the possible effect of this in a country where relief of the lower classes had long been looked upon as a duty to be performed by the upper strata of society and not as the proper goal of the lower classes themselves. ✓

In many respects, Wesley was of the spirit of

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

the new industrial era. His organization of the societies, his conception and administration of constructive charities, and above everything else, his impatience with outworn methods stamp him as akin to that child of the Industrial Revolution, "the business man." To all ancient restraints, Wesley returned the pragmatic answer of the new race. "My Lord," he had said to the learned Joseph Butler, Bishop of Bristol, "wherever I think I can do most good, there must I stay, so long as I think so. . . . But if I should be convinced in the meanwhile that I could advance the glory of God and the salvation of souls, in any other place more than in Bristol, in that hour, by God's help, I will go hence; which till then I may not do."

The individualism of Wesley's theology is recognized, although his insistence upon conversion and his appreciation of the emotional life have sometimes been condemned by the same voices which laud the new freedom of the politicians or grow husky in praise of the Romantic Movement in literature. Ruthlessly Wesley carried the dominant tenet of his century into his theology. Nowhere is this more evident than in the controversy that nearly wrecked the Methodist movement.

Most of the clergy of the Church of England, and practically all dissenters, were Calvinists, adherents to the stern faith that man is saved only by the irresistible grace of God, that his destiny is not his

FIFTY YEARS OF ENGLAND

own, that he is clay in the Potter's hands. But in the sixteenth century, Dutch burghers, rebelling against aristocracy in Church and State, had shown favor to the doctrine of one Arminius, who had held the contrary, declaring men's ability to accept or reject the proffered mercy of God. Strangely enough, in England, Arminianism was associated with High Church and theories of divine right rather than with liberalism in church and politics. From his High-church youth, Wesley brought his own sympathy with the individualistic doctrines of the Dutch scholar.

Calvinism has not, as is sometimes said, tended to make its professors subservient to tyranny; on the contrary, it has been the creed of some of the greatest rebels. But in essence such a doctrine does deny individual responsibility, does take away from man the humbling and heartening faith that he has some control over his own destiny, here and hereafter. And with any such doctrine Wesley would have no commerce. Nevertheless, for a time, he did not consider the question as other than theological, and he did not spend time on theoretical quandaries.

But as early as 1740 dissension arose in Methodist circles over the doctrine of predestination. John Wesley at first took the ground that a Methodist might be either a Calvinist or an Arminian, and that the question should not be agitated. When Charles forbade admission of one Acourt because

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

he held Calvinistic views, John decreed that one's opinions were not to be questioned: all he asked was that a member should not trouble others by disputing. But trouble increased, until Wesley thought it necessary to speak. He did so by preaching in Bristol against Calvinism. In this sermon on "Free Grace," Wesley delivered himself with unusual vehemence against the conception of a tyrannical God:

This is the blasphemy clearly contained in the *horrible decree* of predestination! And here I fixed my foot. On this I join issue with every assertion of it. You represent God as worse than the devil; more false, more evil, more unjust. . . .

O how would the enemy of God and man rejoice to hear these things were so! How would he lift up his voice and say, "To your tents, O Israel! Flee from the face of this God, or ye shall utterly perish! But whither will ye flee? Into heaven? He is there. Down to hell? He is there also. Ye cannot flee from an omnipresent, almighty tyrant. And whether ye flee or stay, I call heaven, his throne, and earth, his footstool, to witness against you, ye shall perish, ye shall die eternally. Sing, O hell; and rejoice, ye that are under the earth! For God, even the mighty God, hath spoken, and devoted to death thousands of souls, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof! . . . Let all the sons of hell shout for joy! For the decree is past, and who shall disannul it?"

Yea, the decree is past; and so it was before the foundation of the world. But what decree? Even this: "I will set before the sons of men 'life and death, blessing and cursing.' And the soul that chooseth life shall live, as the soul that chooseth death shall die."

FIFTY YEARS OF ENGLAND

So far did he carry his belief in the freedom of the individual that even on the question which was considered crucial as between Catholics and Protestants—salvation by faith—the Minutes of 1770 spoke as follows:

1. Who of us is *now* accepted of God? He that now believes in Christ, with a loving, obedient heart.
2. But who among those who never heard of Christ? He that feareth God, and worketh righteousness according to the light he has.
3. Is this the same with “he that is sincere?” Nearly, if not quite.
4. Is not this “salvation by works?” Not by the *merit* of works but by works as a *condition*.
5. What have we then been disputing about for these thirty years? I am afraid, *about words*.
6. As to *merit itself*, of which we have been so dreadfully afraid: we are rewarded *according to our works*. How does this differ from, *for the sake of our works*? And how differs this from *secundum merita operum*, “as our works deserve?” Can you split this hair? I doubt, I cannot.

In response to the controversy raised by this minute, Wesley “interpreted” it in the conventional terminology of justification by faith, but his essential convictions were without doubt set forth in the minute.

On the doctrine of predestination, Wesley separated from his dearest friends. Whitefield was in America when John Wesley preached his sermon on “Free Grace” in 1740, but he immediately re-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

monstrated by letter. Partizans attempted to raise trouble between the friends by distributing at the door of the Foundry, where Wesley was preaching, a broadsheet containing some remarks of Whitefield on the subject. When he arose to speak, Wesley held up the broadsheet and said that he intended doing with it as he was sure Whitefield would approve, tearing it up without reading it. Accordingly, he tore his paper into bits, and the people did likewise with those which were in their hands. ✓

The division between the Wesleys and Whitefield could not thus be averted. Some friends built Whitefield a tabernacle near Wesley's Foundry, and the two former comrades preached for a while, if not in opposition, at least in different camps. Whitefield would never have attempted to give form to his movement by organization if he had not fallen in with a woman of executive ability who supplied ambition and money for the purpose. Selina, Countess of Huntingdon, was converted, and at once took Whitefield under her patronage. The evangelist was thus thrown into company where aristocratic doctrine was especially popular. At the countess's house in Chelsea, Whitefield preached to a discriminating audience of whom unbelievers such as Chesterfield and Bolingbroke were often members.

With the Countess of Huntingdon, Whitefield was also associated with Calvinistic clergymen who coöperated in spreading Methodism with a Genevan

FIFTY YEARS OF ENGLAND

accent. The Honorable and Reverend Walter Shirley, cousin of the countess, was one of her noted preachers. Shirley, with his cousin, was connected with many of the princely houses of Europe and was brought to public notoriety in England by the unfortunate career of his brother, the Earl of Ferrers, whose trial and execution for a particularly cold-blooded murder was one of the celebrated cases in the latter half of the century.

Lady Huntingdon herself built chapels, purchased advowsons for evangelical clergymen of the Calvinistic persuasion, and in every way forwarded the cause. In the course of the work, her followers came into inevitable conflict with Wesleys. During Whitefield's lifetime, he and his two great comrades had only temporary estrangements. They preached in each other's pulpits, and, except for occasional lapses, remained as of old. On September 29, 1770, Whitefield preached for nearly two hours in the open air at Exeter, New Hampshire. "You are more fit to go to bed than to preach," said a friend, before the evangelist began. "True," replied Whitefield; then added, "Lord Jesus, I am weary *in* Thy work, but not *of* Thy work." The next day he died and was buried in Newburyport, Massachusetts.

Whitefield intended to be buried in his chapel in Tottenham Court, and he wished the Wesleys to be buried there also. "We will all lie together," he said; and he admonished his congregation: "You re-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

fuse them entrance here while living: they can do you no harm when they are dead." According to Whitefield's request, John Wesley preached the funeral sermon in the Tottenham Court Chapel and also in Whitefield's tabernacle in Moorfields. His text was, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."

Restrained during his lifetime by the friendship of the leaders, after Whitefield's death the storm broke. The "Minutes" quoted above were already in circulation, and the famous "Calvinian Controversy" began. Books, pamphlets, hymns, newspaper articles, which were the weapons of the antagonists, now seem barren and repulsive. The Rev. Montague Augustus Toplady, who was a brilliant controversialist, sometimes wrote like a costermonger. "Mr. Augustus Toplady I know well," wrote John to his brother, "but I do not fight with chimney sweepers. He is too dirty a writer for me to meddle with; I should only foul my fingers." Polemics in the eighteenth century naturally involved the versifiers. Few controversies called forth worse examples of this sort. The Wesleyan position was attacked as Roman Catholic.

In vain for worse may Wesley search the globe,
A viper hatched beneath the harlot's robe;
Rome, in her glory, has no greater boast,
Than Wesley's aims—to all conviction lost.

If Charles Wesley's missiles were no more soothing, they were at least better jingles.

FIFTY YEARS OF ENGLAND

O Horrible Decree
Worthy of whence it came!
Forgive their hellish blasphemy
Who charge it on the Lamb.

[The doctrine he explains as follows:]
The righteous God consigned
Them over to their doom,
And sent the Saviour of mankind
To damn them from the womb;
To damn for falling short
Of what they could not do
For not believing the report
Of that which was not true.

This controversy divided the Methodists and many of their sympathizers into two camps. Lady Huntingdon's chapels were later licensed as dissenting chapels and most of her clerical helpers, choosing to remain in the Church of England, severed formal connection with her, while Wesley continued to labor to retain his followers within the church.

Wesley's marked affinities with the modern world to which a dying century was to give birth must not be allowed to overshadow the fact that in some things he remained always a son of the old order. He never gave over his autocratic rule of the societies. As late as 1779, when Wesley was 76 years

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

old, one of the most popular of his preachers, Alexander M'Nab, openly defied his authority. M'Nab was preacher at Bath, and Wesley instructed him to allow an Irish preacher, unknown to M'Nab, to occupy his pulpit. M'Nab refused, alleging that he had been appointed by the conference, not by Wesley, and Wesley promptly deposed him. This difficulty, which a competent historian considered the most dangerous ordeal through which Methodism passed during the lifetime of its founder, was met by Wesley's calm statement, "As long as any preacher joins with me, he is to be directed by me in his work." Almost a decade later, when he was 85 years old, Wesley wrote to the trustees of a chapel at Dewsbury, who had refused to accept his method of "settling" chapels, "Therefore, if you will not receive them [Methodist preachers] on these terms, you renounce connection with your affectionate brother, John Wesley."

If in his direction of Methodism he was a despot, he was a benevolent one. He asked for results, not theories, and he persisted in his autocratic rule because he believed this the only way to achieve his purpose. Democracies he distrusted, and he brought over from the days of mercantilism and divine right a firm belief in discipline. To counterbalance Methodist individualism, he stressed social control by his classes and bands, by class leaders and helpers; nor did his enthusiasm for such control diminish with age. In 1778, he wrote to one of his preachers:

FIFTY YEARS OF ENGLAND

Dear Billy,—The soul and the body make a man; the Spirit and discipline make a Christian. . . . Insist upon the observance of all the society rules, by all the members of society; and on the observance of all (even the least) of the band rules, by all that meet in band. I give, for instance, no band tickets to any woman, who wears either ruffles or a high crowned cap. . . .

The "Spirit and discipline"—his followers were to speak much of that liberty which is said to be of the Spirit, but Wesley combined in himself the new emphasis of his century on the freedom of the individual with the discipline which was of the essence of an older society.

12-12-1912
Aug 12 1912

CHAPTER XII

THE SPIRIT OF '76

IF Englishmen in the 1760's and '70's were only mildly aware of economic and intellectual changes, they were keenly alive to the problems raised by their American colonies. In this, as in other concerns of the century, Wesley shared the interests and often the views of the most intelligent of his contemporaries. His own relations with the colonies were of long standing, for he had been in America before most of the generation which took active part in the Revolution were born; for when Wesley was in Georgia in 1736, George Washington was only four years old, and George III was not born until 1738, the year of Wesley's return to England. However unpleasant his stay in Oglethorpe's colony, Wesley did not allow his opinions to be warped by his personal experiences, and he had retained a lively interest in America and American affairs. Since his own return from the colonies he had had reliable sources of information concerning them. His friend Whitefield had gone up and down the seaboard preaching and collecting for his orphanage. From 1768, Wesley had preachers in the col-

THE SPIRIT OF '76

onies. The first Methodist chapel was built in New York in that year, and one of the preachers was a convert of Wesley, a Captain Webb, who had lost an eye on the Heights of Abraham. In 1769, two missionaries were sent out with fifty pounds as a gift to the American work. Two years later, two others followed, one of them Francis Asbury, the greatest figure in the founding of American Methodism. Then, in the very teeth of the storm, Wesley sent out two more trusted preachers. "I let you loose, George," he wrote to one of them, "on the great continent of America. Publish your message in the open face of the sun, and do all the good you can."

During the years when the conflict was brewing, Wesley's great concern was to avoid war. To this end he exhorted preachers and people in America to labor for peace. On March 1, 1775, Wesley wrote to Thomas Rankin, one of his preachers in America, telling him that "there is now a probability that God will hear the prayer, and turn the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. It is not unlikely that peace will be re-established between England and the colonies." He also enclosed with this letter a missive to his preachers in America. His advice to them was to keep neutral:

You were never in your lives in so critical a situation as you are at this time. It is your part to be peace-makers; to be loving and tender to all; but to addict yourselves to no party. In spite of all solicitations, or rough or smooth words,

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

say not one word against one or the other side. Keep yourselves pure: Do all you can to help and profit all: But beware how you adopt another's jar.

At the same time Charles Wesley was writing to Rankin:

As to the public affairs, I wish you to be like-minded with me. I am of neither side, and yet of both: On the side of New England and of Old. Christians are excused, exempted, privileged, to take no part in civil troubles. We love all, and pray for all, with a sincere and impartial love. Faults there may be on both sides; but such as neither you nor I can remedy. Therefore, let us, and all our children, give ourselves unto prayer, and so stand still and see the salvation of God.

The situation in England was alarming to one who wished for peace. On the one side were extremists who cried out for America and liberty. Wesley found, throughout the two kingdoms, "an huge majority of them, exasperated almost to madness." The conditions, he thought, were similar to those of 1640, when the people had been excited in a similar way, largely "by inflammatory papers, which were spread, as they are now, with the utmost diligence in every corner of the land." On the other side voices were raised in fanatical opposition to the claims of the colonists. In March, 1775, Lord Sandwich made a speech in the House of Lords, in which he spoke of the Americans as "raw, undisciplined, cowardly men," and repeated a story to the

THE SPIRIT OF '76

effect that, at the siege of Louisburg, the Americans had fled at the sound of a cannon.

Between these two extremes was a body of moderate opinion, favoring the claims of the colonies, but understanding that those claims embodied only requests for constitutional rights, and not a demand for independence. "Although I love the Americans as men prizing and setting a just value upon that inestimable blessing, liberty," said Chatham, "yet if I could once persuade myself that they entertain the most distant intention of throwing off the legislative supremacy and great constitutional superintending power and control of the British Legislature, I should myself be the very first person . . . to enforce the power by every exertion this country is capable of making."

Until the middle of June, 1775, John Wesley belonged to the moderate group whose sentiments were thus expressed by the Earl of Chatham. On June 14, Wesley addressed a letter to Lord Dartmouth, a leading Evangelical and then secretary for the colonies. On the next day, he sent an almost identical letter to Lord North. The burden of these letters was a plea that it was not common sense for England to attempt force against the colonies. The latter were "terribly excited." Only the preceding week, a man from Philadelphia had informed Wesley that, as low as "the Jerseys and Pennsylvania," the people were determined against the English measures. They thought that they were fighting for

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

liberty, and this would give them an advantage over mercenary troops. As to such stories as Lord Sandwich had told about "raw, undisciplined troops," Wesley himself had a story about "our valiant, disciplined militia." A clergyman, who had been on the spot, had told him that at PrestonPans—which Wesley dated 1716—a large body of English militia was advancing, when a boy in a neighboring wood accidentally fired a fowling-piece, causing the valiant militia to run for their lives. There were internal dissensions to reckon with, continued Wesley in his letters. Trade had decayed and provisions were dear, so that there were multitudes of idle people in England, "ready for the first bidder." Such a condition of affairs might be a punishment on England's luxury and profaneness. But one thing was to be done. Let my lord do what he can for peace. "For God's sake, for the sake of the King, of the nation, of your lovely family, remember Rehoboam! Remember Philip the Second! Remember King Charles the First!"

With this ominous warning, Wesley ended his letters. He was pleading for one thing—peace. On the question of the justice of the American cause he had made but one statement, but that was significant. In the very first of the letter, he had written:

I do not intend to enter upon the question whether the Americans are in the right or in the wrong. Here all my prejudices are against the Americans. For I am a High Churchman, the son of a High Churchman, bred up from my

THE SPIRIT OF '76

childhood in the highest notions of passive obedience and non-resistance. And yet in spite of all my long rooted prejudices, I cannot avoid thinking (if I think at all) that these an oppressed people asked for nothing more than their legal rights; and that in the most modest and inoffensive manner which the nature of the thing would allow.

A few days after penning these lines John Wesley was engaged in abridging for publication a pamphlet which had been written three months before by Dr. Johnson, directed *against* the Americans. In this he affirmed that the supreme power of England had a legal right to lay any tax "for any end beneficial to the whole empire" upon the colonies, and that the trouble in America had been fomented by malcontents in England who were determined enemies of monarchy.

The causes which, within a few days' time, changed John Wesley from a defender of the American cause to a determined opponent deserve more attention than has been given them by writers intent only upon defending Wesley from the charge of plagiarism. The following explanation is put forward, not merely because the subject has often been passed over by biographers, but also because an appreciation of Wesley's motives is valuable for all who would comprehend the complexion of public sentiment in England in those June days.

Politically, Wesley was one with the great body of the country clergy of his day; he was "a High Churchman, son of a High Churchman." As such

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

he had inherited a tradition of loyalty to the Crown which harked back to the Stuart theory of the divine right of kings. In spite of all the talk about liberty and the rights of Englishmen, the call of church and king was still potent among large groups, among whom were the Tory clergy. Charles Wesley did not speak only for himself when he prayed for a king "subject to none but Thee," and wrote of the king as "Thy great vicegerent here." When John Wesley was asked how far preachers should preach politics, his answer was that they should speak on political questions only when it was necessary to defend the king or his government. As he wrote to Lord Dartmouth, all his prejudices were against the Americans.

These prejudices he had overcome in the light of his information about the colonies and his honest belief in the sincerity of their claims. But his sympathy did not include armed rebellion. "If a blow is struck," he wrote Charles on June 2, 1775, "I give America for lost; and perhaps England too." Bad as the situation was on the first of June, there was still hope. The king prorogued Parliament May 28, with a statement to the peers that he had reason to expect the continuance of peace. But on June 13, Wesley had a letter from America telling him that there had been bloodshed. Four hundred regulars, so said the report, and forty militia had been killed. The news was of the Battle of Lexington, fought April 19. On the day that he received this

THE SPIRIT OF '76

news, Wesley wrote Thomas Rankin in America: ". . . The sword is drawn. And it is well if they have not on both sides thrown away the scabbard." On the next day he hastened to write Dartmouth, pleading with impassioned words for some efforts toward peace.

Yet he retained his faith in the Americans. The letter informing him of the battle was from America, doubtless stating that side of the case. The first news of the battle from English sources reached England May 26, and more particulars came May 28; but the official version arrived in London only on June 10. There excitement was intense. The official report of General Gage was published in the Gazette the very evening that it arrived. George III, who on May 28 had declared that there were reasons to expect continuance of peace, now declared that the Americans must be *either* colonists *or* independent. But on the fourteenth, Wesley seems not to have received this official account and wrote Dartmouth and North in the words quoted above.

The simple explanation is that, for nearly three months, Wesley had been in Ireland. From June 13 to 28, he was ill, part of the time confined to his bed at the country-seat of the clerk to the Irish House of Lords, where he was nursed by his host's Methodist wife and daughter. Here, shortly after his letter to the ministers, Wesley must have received the official report of the Battle of Lexing-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

ton, for the account received in London on the tenth would normally reach Dublin a week later. Here also, it may be assumed, he met for the first time with Dr. Johnson's pamphlet, "Taxation No Tyranny," which had been published in London about the time that Wesley left for Ireland. Inflamed by the official report, which seemed to prove that the Americans were striking for independence, Wesley was prepared to be convinced by Dr. Johnson's fiery pamphlet. At once he began, in characteristic fashion, to abridge and edit it for publication. "As soon as I received more light myself," he wrote in explanation of his action, "I judged it my duty to impart it to others."

The Government was almost pathetically grateful when Wesley issued his pamphlet, "A Calm Address to our American Colonies." Copies were handed out at metropolitan church doors, and representatives of the ministry called upon Wesley to offer the service of the Government. But the opposition was even more vocal. The storm that broke upon the publication of the "Calm Address" is understandable only when one remembers the excitement of the time and the prominence of the author. A flood of pamphlets in answer came from the press. One of the most vigorous was from a Baptist minister in Broadmead, Bristol. Among other things, he accused Wesley of having, at a late election, advised the Bristol Methodists to vote for the candidate who was favorable to the American cause, and

THE SPIRIT OF '76

with having recently recommended a book entitled, "An Argument in Defense of the Exclusive Right Claimed by the Colonists to Tax Themselves." Wesley denied that he had seen the book, whereupon the preacher proceeded to get two witnesses for his statement. A little later, Wesley laconically answered that he now remembered the book. To a friend, he wrote:

Dear James—I will now simply tell you the thing as it is. As I was returning from the Leeds conference one gave me the tract which you refer to, part of which I read on my journey. The spirit of it I observed to be admirably good; and I *then* thought the arguments conclusive. In consequence of which, I suppose (though I do not remember it) I recommended it both to you and others; but I had so entirely forgotten it, that even when it was brought to me the other day, I could not recollect that I had seen it. I am, etc.

JOHN WESLEY.

A writer in the Gentleman's Magazine who signed himself "Americus" put the substance of many attacks with a terseness not unworthy of Wesley himself. "You have forgot the precept of your Master," he wrote to Wesley, "that God and mammon cannot be served together. You have one eye upon a pension, and the other upon heaven,—one hand stretched out to the king, and the other raised up to God. I pray that the first may reward you, and the last forgive you!"

In simple truth, Wesley had not changed his principles. He only changed his mind as to the

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

motives of the Americans. His actions all the way through were entirely consistent with his political doctrines, and in his views he was at one with no inconsiderable part of middle-class England. ✓

Of the charge of plagiarism, little need be said. Such a charge moved Wesley very little indeed, for it was his common practice to abridge other people's works for the edification of his own constituency. His "Christian Library" was simply a "five-foot shelf of books" which he had abridged—"maimed" would be the better word in many cases—to make them suitable for his purpose. In this habit, he had, at least once, run foul of a copyright. In 1745 he had had to pay the publisher, Robert Dodsley, fifty pounds for infringing the copyright of Young's "Night Thoughts" and some other works owned by Dodsley. In the case of "Taxation No Tyranny" Wesley simply resorted to his usual practice, and neither he nor Johnson seems to have been in the least troubled by it. In 1797, the Gentleman's Magazine carried what purported to be an unpublished letter of Dr. Johnson to Wesley, the authenticity of which has not been challenged. After thanking Wesley for a copy of his "Notes on the New Testament," which Wesley's sister, Mrs. Hall, had given him, Johnson referred to the "Calm Address": ✓

I have thanks to return for the addition of your important suffrage to my argument on the American question.

THE SPIRIT OF '76

To have gained such a mind as yours may justly confirm me in my own opinion. What effect my paper has had on the public I know not; but I have no reason to be discouraged. The lecturer was surely in the right, who though he saw his audience slinking away, refused to quit his chair while Plato stayed. ✓

Having taken his position on the American question, Wesley allowed his Tory prejudices to have full sway in combating all opposition to the king and ministry. On July 31, 1775 he wrote his brother Charles concerning the rebellious tendencies of their Bristol printer, William Pine: ✓

If he still, after my earnest warning, "every week publishes bare-faced treason," I beg you would once more warn him in my name, and in your own; and if he slights or forgets this warning, then give him his choice, either to leave us quietly, or to be publicly disowned. At such a time as this, when our foreign enemies are hovering over us, and our own nation is all in a ferment, it is particularly improper to say one word which tends to inflame the minds of the people.

On October 19, he wrote to his brother, "I find a danger now of a new kind: A danger of losing my love for the Americans: I mean for their miserable leaders; for the poor sheep are 'more sinned against than sinning.' "

William Pine was not the only man in Bristol who was hot against the Government. On February 3, 1777, Wesley went there to see for himself.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Hearing there was some disturbance at Bristol, occasioned by men whose tongues were set on fire against the Government, I went down in the diligence and on *Tuesday* evening strongly enforced those solemn words, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to speak evil of no man." . . . On Thursday I wrote *A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England*. May God bless this, as He did the former [his "Calm Address to the American Colonies"] by the quenching of that evil fire which is still among us!

In the latter pamphlet Wesley broke out in terms which were not likely to endear him to his brethren on the other side of the Atlantic:

Do any of you blaspheme God or the King? None of you, I trust, who are in connexion with me. I would no more continue in fellowship with those who continued in such a practice, than with whoremongers or Sabbath-breakers, or thieves, or drunkards, or common swearers.

On the fundamental doctrines involved in the discussions of American rights, Wesley took a view sharply distinguished from the sentimental doctrines then becoming fashionable. In this his position was not in accord with the trend of his century. The opinion of respectable sympathizers with the American Revolution was set forth by a prominent nonconformist minister, one Dr. Price, in "Observations on the Nature of Civil Liberty, the Principles of Government, and the Justice and Policy of the War with America."¹ Price held the thesis that

¹ The popularity of Price's pamphlet may be judged by the fact that the preface to the first edition was dated February 8

THE SPIRIT OF '76

all men have a right to be self-governed and independent. Rousseau's favorite doctrine set forth in this fashion was as unacceptable to the Tory Methodist as was Rousseau himself. Wesley read "Emile" and thought the author the most "consummate coxcomb who ever saw the sun." He was a misanthrope and a cynic, and the things which he said which were new were "lighter than vanity itself." "Such discoveries," observed Wesley, "I always expect from those who are too wise to believe their Bibles." This whole theory of natural rights Wesley attacked at the source.

Wesley granted that men had a right to be self-governed and independent when no civil governments were in existence; but he asked, "when was that time, when no civil societies were formed?" He thought that there had been no such time since the Flood, and appealed to history in support of his position. Did the people of England choose their governors before William the Conqueror? Did they choose King Stephen or King John? As to Charles I, the "people" neither gave him his power nor took it away. Wesley, of course, repudiated the Commonwealth; Charles was executed by not even a tenth part of the people. In the same realistic fashion he dismissed the political fiction concerning the accession of William III, for the convention that summoned the Hollander was not the people of

(1776) and that to the fifth edition was dated March 12 of the same year.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

England. In actual politics, he contended, no one pretends that every human being has a right to govern. In republics, women and men under twenty-one are excluded: in England, those not freeholders or possessed of forty shillings a year could not vote. Such exclusion was certainly not in accordance with the doctrine of the "rights of man." "After depriving half the human species of their natural right for want of a beard; after having deprived myriads more for want of a stiff beard, for not having lived one-and-twenty years; you rob others, many hundred thousands, of their birthright for want of money!"

Differing root and branch from the men who believed in "natural rights," Wesley took a realistic view of the trouble with the American colonies. His summary of the causes of the rebellion is a careful and concise statement of the English case. He had at first, in his "Calm Address," referred the genesis of the American trouble to malcontents in England who desired to foment difficulty in the kingdom. Two years later, he had revised his opinion. As early as 1737, when his brother returned from Georgia to England and had been driven by a storm into the port of Boston, the New Englanders were looking forward to independence. This spirit was promoted by the vast increase of wealth in the colonies. America had kept up trade, in spite of the Navigation Acts, with almost every part of Europe, and had increased its wealth by the gentle

THE SPIRIT OF '76

art of smuggling. "And it is notorious that one of the greatest dealers in this kind was the celebrated Mr. Hancock." Smugglers could not be convicted by an American jury, and, as a consequence, the customs of North America brought in only a pittance to the English Government.

In regard to Hancock, Wesley had other plain words to say. He described the Boston Tea-Party:

The famous Mr. John Hancock, some time since, brought into Boston a ship-load of smuggled tea, at noon-day. Just then came in the ships from London, laden with the same commodity, which, by the removal of the former tax, they were now enabled to sell cheaper than him. What could he now do *pro patria*? . . . in plain English, not to lose by his cargo? All Europe knows what was done. . . . It is not so commonly known who employed them [those who threw the tea into the harbor] or paid them for their labor. To be sure, good Mr. Hancock knew no more of it than a child unborn!

Wesley had decided ideas on smuggling, as he had come into conflict with it, on the Devonshire coast in particular, and he did not hesitate to speak as plainly about American smuggling as he had spoken against Irish and English smuggling:

"What! Do you compare Mr. H[ancock] to a felon?" "I do, in this respect: I compare every smuggler to a felon; a private smuggler to a sneaking felon, a pickpocket; a noon-day smuggler to a bold felon, a robber on the highway. And if a person of this undeniably character is made President of a Congress, I leave every man of sense to determine what is to be expected from them."

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

The repeal of the Stamp Act gave the Americans the impression that they had the sympathy of a large number of people in England. The defeat of the French left America with nothing to fear from Canada. So the way was paved for them to seek separation from England. Yet the Americans talked of allegiance and said that they desired nothing but the liberty of Englishmen, and many people in England cordially believed them; "I myself for one," said Wesley. At last when America was well entrenched, "the talk of liberty was over: independency was the word."

When Wesley wrote "A Calm Address to the Inhabitants of England" (1777), he was sure that the Lord had at last smiled on the English in answer to a general fast which the king had proclaimed. The English forces had taken possession of Long Island and of New York, Fort Washington and Fort Lee. Wesley was moved to hope that even the atrocities of the Americans "who drive men, women, and children into the wild woods in the depths of winter," and who burn down whole towns "without any regard for the sick or aged, that necessarily perish in the flames," were over.

Despite his attack upon the American cause, Wesley agreed, in theory, with his friend, Dean Joseph Tucker, of Gloucester, who, though a Tory, was setting forth the theory that colonies were unprofitable, that trade would follow the most lucrative channels. If the Americans were free to do as they

THE SPIRIT OF '76

pleased, they would trade with England, because England could undersell other nations. England should not enter into a useless war to hold the colonies, but should drop them and promote commerce. This position was to be the position of Adam Smith and the new economic liberalism, and to this Wesley agreed. On December 26, 1775, he wrote: "But I say, as Dean Tucker, 'Let them drop.' Cut off all other connexion with them than we have with Holland or Germany. Four-and-thirty millions they have cost us to support them since Queen Anne died. Let them cost us no more. Let them have their desire and support themselves."

Wesley's attitude on the American question was making his control of American Methodists impossible. His preachers in the colonies were suspected; only Asbury was able to remain at his post, and he was in hiding part of the time. Increasingly it became evident that Methodism in America would be independent of British control, either in the person of Wesley or of the Church of England. In 1779 some of the preachers in the southern colonies took it upon themselves to administer the sacraments without the authority of previous ordination. Before the close of the war, Wesley was faced with the fact that the fifteen thousand American Methodists would not be content to be members of a religious society—they would have nothing less than a church.

CHAPTER XIII

ANACREON

ON June 28, 1782, Wesley wrote in his Journal:

I entered my eightieth year; but, blessed be God, my time is not "labour and sorrow." I find no more pain or bodily infirmities than at five-and-twenty. This I still impute (1) to the power of God fitting me for what He calls me to; (2) to my still travelling four or five thousand miles a year; (3) to my sleeping, night and day, whenever I want it; (4) to my rising at a set hour; and (5) to my constant preaching, particularly in the morning.

The regimen to which Wesley attributed his vigor is illustrated by his diary¹ for the closing years of his life. This last diary begins December 1, 1782, and continues until October 24, 1790. The most significant disclosure which the day-by-day record makes is that, until the end, John Wesley lived as if he were yet a member of the Holy Club of Oxford. He rose at four in the morning, occasion-

¹ The diaries which Wesley kept during his entire life and which furnished the facts for his printed Journal have not all been preserved, but his private record of the last eight years is fortunately one of those which has escaped the fate of the diaries for the middle period of his life.

ANACREON

ally at three, to go about his duties, as methodically as if he were thirty instead of eighty. And his mind was as active as his body.

After he was eighty Wesley made two trips to Holland, his half-apologetic air betraying the fact that they were mainly in the way of being pleasure jaunts. On June 12, 1783, he sailed from Harwich, reading an "Account of Holland" during the crossing. In Holland he met many friends, among whom were Scotch and English ministers who opened their churches to the venerable itinerant. As almost forty-five years before, he was delighted with Dutch cities. He found Rotterdam "as clean as a gentleman's parlour." He admired the marble used for interior ornament and wondered why other nations had not copied this excellence. The women and children were beautiful, and their bland faces seemed to him to have "an inexpressible air of innocence." Nothing escaped his curious old eyes. "One little circumstance I observed which I suppose is peculiar to Holland: to most chamber windows a looking-glass is placed on the outside of the sash, so as to show the whole street, with all the passengers. There is something very pleasing in these moving pictures. Are they found in no other country?" Everywhere he was treated with such courtesy that he protested against the notion that Hollanders are "of a cold, phlegmatic, unfriendly temper. Not even the Irish are more affectionate." On July 4 he returned to London to look back on his trip with no little satis-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

faction. "I can by no means regret either the trouble or expense which attended this little journey," he wrote in his Journal. "It opened me a way into, as it were, a new world; where the land, the buildings, the customs, were all such as I had never seen before. But as those with whom I conversed were of the same spirit with my friends in England, I was as much at home in Utrecht and Amsterdam as in Bristol and London." Three years later, he paid another visit to Holland, again meeting with almost universal kindness and enjoying the little holiday among surroundings which appealed to his innate love of neatness and orderly living.

But all his admiration for another people could not separate him from his first love. Shortly after his return from his visit to Holland in 1783, he went to Oxford, perhaps to see if it did compare with the new country he had so much admired. "Observing narrowly the hall at Christ Church," so ran his Journal entry, "I was convinced it is both loftier and larger than that of the Stadhuis in Amsterdam. I observed also the gardens and walks in Holland, although extremely pleasant, were not to be compared with St. John's or Trinity gardens; much less with the parks, Magdalen water-walks, &c., Christ Church meadow, or the White Walk." He was yet "John Wesley, Sometime Fellow of Lincoln."

In February, 1784, Wesley met with his preachers to consider whether missionaries should be sent

ANACREON

to the East Indies. The decision was that there was as yet no "providential opening" there. The next week after this conference Wesley spent an hour with Boswell's hero, General Pascal Paoli. Wesley's admiration for the Corsican was unstinted, but he made characteristic comment to the effect that the general was happier in his retirement than in the midst of his victories. The life which Wesley's temperament as well as his Methodism made impossible for him, the seclusion of a scholar within the gray walls of Oxford, never ceased to haunt him.

On March 1 Wesley, then eighty-one years old, set out on a seven months' journey to the West of England, Scotland, and Wales. He preached incessantly, reproved the people for leaving off early morning services, noted some good stories about dreams, and read Ariosto, Voltaire, and "Fingal." But even in his hardened little frame there were signs of decay. The intense cold made him sick, and to a friend who urged him to visit America again, he replied sadly, "Nay, I shall pay no more visits to new worlds, till I go to the world of spirits."

Wesley was now approaching the culmination of a long struggle. Forty years before, his first conference had considered the question: "Do we separate from the Church?" The answer then and ever since had been, "No." A decade after the first conference, John Wesley had replied to Charles's fears

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

by refusing to worry about what would happen after his own and his brother's death; they would keep the Methodists in the Church while they lived, come what might after their death. But Wesley had not left everything to chance, and as he now prepared to take final steps to secure the future of Methodism, the old man must have looked back across the years to recall his various attempts to "settle" his societies before he died.

In 1763, Erasmus, a bishop of the Greek Orthodox Church, had come to London, and Wesley, after investigating his credentials, had at least three of his preachers, John Jones, Samuel Staniforth, and Thomas Bryant, ordained by the Eastern prelate. Toplady stoutly asserted that Wesley himself sought ordination as bishop from the same source, but there is little to support the statement. Had opposition among the Methodists not arisen to the point that the preachers ordained by Erasmus were prevented from exercising their priestly functions, part of Wesley's problem would have been solved. His ordained helpers could have administered the sacraments and thus stopped the clamor for ordination on the part of the Methodist itinerants. Besides, there would have been younger ordained men to have carried on the work after the founder's death. But so intense was the feeling, stirred up partly by Charles, that this effort came to naught.

Other attempts to establish the societies had like-

ANACREON

wise failed. A league of evangelical clergymen, who were to disregard doctrinal differences in caring for the societies, was wrecked on Wesley's insistence that his preachers must have the right to preach anywhere, in accordance with his principle, "the world is my parish." A plan to have a committee appointed from the preachers after his death to perform duties previously undertaken by Wesley, to propose, admit, exclude, and appoint preachers, also fell by the wayside. Wesley saw very quickly that his committee would be only a cause of confusion. For this scheme he substituted that of nominating a successor, who should assume the Wesleyan dictatorship after his death. Fletcher, of Madeley, whom Wesley selected, is popularly supposed to have been chosen only because of his saintliness and learning, but he may have appealed to Wesley because his character retained some of the marks of the soldier of fortune that he had been in his early life. Whatever the reasons for his nomination, Fletcher declined to undertake such a task, promising only to assist in every way possible if he and Charles should outlive John Wesley himself.

In the meantime, Wesley had done everything he could to forestall secession. The assistants had positive instructions to exhort those who were brought up in the church to continue therein. They were further charged, "Set the example yourself; and immediately change every plan [he meant time of service, etc.] that would hinder their being at

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Church at least two Sundays in four." The houses were plain "preaching-houses" or "chapels"; they were not to be licensed as dissenting meeting-houses; but, if persecution rendered it necessary to license them under the Conventicle Acts, then the license was to be for a Methodist, not a dissenting, chapel. Services in chapel were to be distinguished from the public worship of the church. "But some may say, 'Our own service is public worship.' Yes; but not such as supersedes the Church Service; it presupposes public prayer, like the sermons at the University." ✓

But the fateful moment when the future of the societies must be settled could no longer be postponed. In spite of his vigor, Wesley knew that his days were numbered. Nearly two hundred preachers and forty-four thousand Methodists in Great Britain alone could not be left to the mercy of his assistants and the graces of a church which had neglected where it had not opposed them. Besides these, fifteen thousand Methodists in America were speaking with a new note of independence, and no amount of exhortation could reconcile them to a church which now scarcely existed in the new nation. Unless he was to desert utterly the thousands whom he had called into his societies, Wesley was compelled to provide some scheme to perpetuate his work. ✓

But would such a step mean separation from the church? This was the problem which he had evaded

ANACREON

thirty years before when Charles had ceased to be an itinerant preacher and had besought his brother to take some decisive action before the Methodists should drift too far from the church. The first point to be settled, if Methodist organization was to continue, concerned the appointing of preachers to the chapels. The heart of Wesley's system was his power to send whom he would where he would. Already the trustees of the chapels were protesting; they wanted to choose their own preachers. "We are no republicans," answered Wesley, "and never intend to be." ✓

To secure the power of appointment from falling to the trustees, Wesley executed a "Deed of Declaration" in the High Court of Chancery which provided that a conference of preachers should have the powers formerly exercised by himself. The conference was to consist of one hundred preachers whom Wesley chose out of the nearly two hundred then in service, and was to be a self-perpetuating body. The choice of one hundred preachers, the "Legal Hundred," caused some heartburnings, and several preachers, including the two Hampsons, one of whom later wrote the first "Life of Wesley," left the connection. But Methodism had a permanent organization.

Wesley's second step was more radical. The preachers had long clamored for ordination, and the call of American Methodists was now imperative, for with the failing of the English church in

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

the colonies after the Revolution, the people were left without the sacraments. Wesley had long believed that he, as a presbyter of the Church of England, had as much right to ordain as any bishop, for the doctrine of apostolic succession he held to be no more than a fable. Nevertheless, he had tried every method to secure episcopal ordination for his preachers. When his scheme to use Erasmus failed, Wesley tried to get Bishop Lowth, the great Hebraist, then Bishop of London, to ordain a man for America, but Lowth refused. There seemed nothing left for Wesley but for him to act upon his convictions and himself lay hands on his preachers.

Having broached the subject of American work to Thomas Coke, a clergyman and a doctor of civil law, Wesley received a curious reply broadly hinting that Coke would like to go to America. This Wesley approved, but Coke was not satisfied. In face of the evidence, one can hardly deny that Dr. Coke wanted to be Bishop Coke. Wesley had already noticed that Coke's "grand enemy" was "applause." Now Coke appealed to Wesley for some sufficient authority, since Francis Asbury was reported to have said that he would receive no emissary from Wesley. Coke asked that Wesley lay hands upon him to give him authority to ordain others. This Wesley finally consented to do, although he expressly stated that he was "consecrat-

AN ACREON

ing" him as "superintendent" of the work in America.

Whatever Wesley intended, Coke meant to be bishop. He so referred to himself later when he tried to secure amalgamation of American Methodism with the Protestant Episcopal Church. But against the idea of making bishops Wesley revolted. He had taken the steps to set up a church in America, because the one logic which he followed in critical moments, the logic of circumstances, constrained him; but he would have nothing of a "Methodist *Episcopal* Church." Hence the letter to Asbury which that worthy's latest biographer¹ thinks an expression of "the childish jealousy and peevishness of a garrulous old man."

But in one point, my dear brother, [wrote Wesley to Asbury] I am a little afraid, both the doctor and you differ from me. I study to be little; you study to be great. I creep; you strut along. I found a school; you a college! nay, and call it after your own names! [Cokesbury—Coke and Asbury]. . . .

One instance of this, of your greatness, has given me great concern. How can you, how dare you, suffer yourself to be called a bishop? I shudder, I start at the very thought! Men may call me a knave, or a fool, a rascal, a scoundrel, and I am content; but they shall never, by my consent, call me bishop! For my sake, for God's sake, for Christ's sake, put a full end to this! . . .

¹ Herbert Asbury, whose "A Methodist Saint: A Life of Bishop Asbury" was published in 1927.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Thus, my dear Franky, I have told you all that is in my heart. And let this, when I am no more seen, bear witness how sincerely I am your affectionate friend and brother,

JOHN WESLEY

There is no need to review here the long technical controversy over the "validity" of Wesley's ordinations. Charles, upon hearing of his brother's action, was beside himself. His own High-church position he stated in verse:

How easily are bishops made
By man or woman's whim!
Wesley his hands on Coke hath laid,
But who laid hands on him?

Two weeks after the ordinations, Charles wrote to his brother:

Near thirty years . . . you have stood against the importunate solicitations of your Preachers, who have scarcely at last prevailed. . . . But when once you began ordaining in America, I knew, and you knew, that your Preachers here would never rest, till you ordained them. . . . Alas! what trouble are you preparing for yourself, as well as for me, and for your oldest, truest, best friends! Before you have quite broken down the bridge, stop, and consider! If your sons have no regard for you, have some regard for yourself. Go to your grave in peace; at least, suffer me to go first before this ruin is under your hand. So much, I think, you owe to my father, to my brother, and to me, as to stay till I am taken from the evil. I am on the brink of the grave. Do not push me in, or embitter my last moments. Let us not leave an indelible blot on our memory; but let us leave behind us the name and character of honest men.

ANACREON

To Charles's point, quoted from a statement of Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, that "ordination is separation," John returned no direct answer. He protested that he intended no separation, although he believed himself a *scriptural* bishop and uninterrupted apostolic succession a fable "which no man ever did or can prove." "But," he insisted, "this does in no wise interfere with my remaining in the Church of England, from which I have no more desire to separate than I had fifty years ago. I still attend all the ordinances of the Church, at all opportunities; and I constantly and earnestly desire all that are connected with me so to do. . . . And this is what I meant twenty-seven years ago, when I persuaded our brethren not to separate from the Church."

But Charles was right; the ordinations were not to stop with the preachers for America. John Wesley was now persuaded to ordain for Scotland, where the Methodists had as little chance to receive the sacraments as in the New World. Having gone thus far, impelled by the necessities of concrete situations, he took the final step and ordained men for England. Some twenty-eight men in all were ordained by Wesley for Methodist work in the British Isles and in America.

Thus John Wesley prepared the way for separation, but with pathetic tenacity he yet clung to his dream. On May 11, 1788, he wrote to Henry Moore:

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Still the more I reflect, the more I am convinced, that the Methodists ought not to leave the Church. I judge that to lose a thousand, yea, ten thousand of our people would be a less evil than this. . . . Our glorying hitherto has been not to be a separate Body."

Over the date, May 4, 1789, Wesley published a sermon on "The Ministerial Office," in which he proclaimed once more the character of his Methodism—a Methodism which was fast coming to exist only in his own mind:

... this is our peculiar glory. It is new upon the earth. Revolve all the histories of the Church, from the earliest ages, and you will find, whenever there was a great work of God in any particular city or nation, the subjects of that work soon said to their neighbors, "Stand by yourselves, for we are holier than you." As soon as ever they separated themselves, either they retired into deserts, or they built religious houses; or at least formed parties, into which none was admitted but such as subscribed both to their judgment and practice. But with the Methodists it is quite otherwise: They are not a sect or party; they do not separate from the religious community to which they at first belonged; they are still members of the Church;—such they desire to live and die. And I believe, one reason why God is pleased to continue my life so long is, to confirm them in their present purpose, not to separate from the Church.

The Methodists were not a sect; they must stay in the church—this is repeated until one suspects that for the old man the very words were an escape from the reality. But Charles, passionate in his

ANACREON

loyalty to the Church of England, was not deceived. He continued to quote the Chief Justice's opinion: "Ordination is separation." And Charles was right.

✓

Charles, who had written that he was on the brink of the grave, had remained the eccentric poet, becoming if possible more of a High-churchman as he grew older. The ordinations aroused him to hot words, but nothing could break the strong bonds which bound together the two brothers. "We have taken each other for better for worse," Charles wrote to John, "till death do us—part? No; but unite eternally."

For many years, Charles's home in London had been a place to which many beyond the circle of the Methodists loved to resort. Charles was held in high esteem by the musical world, Handel having set not less than six of his hymns to music. His sons were musical prodigies; the boy Charles was organist to the Prince of Wales, the future George IV, and Samuel gave earnest of his future fame on the same instrument. The best musicians of the time, among them Dr. Burney and Dr. Howard, the organist, were attracted to the two young players. A distinguished company was often present at their father's house in Marylebone to hear them play, frequently with an earl as accompanist. Once Dr. Johnson called and asked the boys to play for him. When they began, he picked up a book and read during the whole time that they played. "After

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

which," wrote Samuel in his "Reminiscences,"¹ "he said, 'Young Gentlemen, I feel much obliged to you both for your Civility.'" John Wesley attended these concerts occasionally, to show that he did not think them wrong, but he found himself, so he said, somewhat out of place among lords and ladies. He loved "plain music and plain company best." ✓

Charles Wesley, now nearly eighty years old, would ride about London, dressed in winter clothes even in summer, mounted upon "a little horse, gray with age." Sometimes he would come to Henry Moore's house in City Road, and, leaving his horse in the garden, would enter, crying, "Pen and ink! Pen and ink!" When they gave him these, he would write down the hymn he had been composing, salute the family, give out a short hymn, "and thus put all in mind of eternity." ✓

Perhaps even more bitter to the eccentric old poet than his brother's action in ordaining had been his son Samuel's step in entering the Church of Rome. Samuel had found favor in high Catholic circles, and the Duchess of Norfolk was chosen to break the news to the father; but if there was any hope that the interest of one of the oldest houses in England would lessen the old man's grief, it was doomed to disappointment. When the Duchess urged various reasons for his son's actions, the aged poet broke in: "Say, 'the loaves and fishes,'

¹ Samuel Wesley's manuscripts, including his "Reminiscences" and a number of letters, are in the British Museum.

ANACREON

madam! say, 'the loaves and fishes'!" But John Wesley wrote his nephew a kind letter. He pleaded with "Sammy," who had never been very religiously minded, not for his return to the Church of England, but that he should seek to "experience that inward change of the earthly, sensual mind, for the mind which was in Christ Jesus." "Whether of this Church or that, I care not," he wrote; "you may be saved in either, or damned in either; but I fear you are not born again; and except ye be born again you cannot see the kingdom of God."

For some time, in the spring of 1788, Charles was ill. His brother sent him, from various places, letters full of medical advice—a split onion to be put warm to the pit of his stomach, ten drops of elixir of vitriol in a glass of water, and, of course, electricity. But "Primitive Physic" could not avail against the attacks of old age. On March 29, Charles died at his London home. High-churchman to the last, he would be buried by none but a clergyman and nowhere but in consecrated ground. So he was laid in the churchyard in Marylebone. "It is a pity," wrote John, to one of the clerical assistants, "but the remains of my brother had been deposited with mine. Certainly that ground [he refers to the burying-ground behind the City Road Chapel where he himself was to be interred] is holy as any in England; and it contains a large quantity of 'bonny dead.' "

Owing to a delay in the mails, John Wesley did

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

not hear of his brother's death in time to attend the funeral. He said little to indicate his grief, but two weeks later, when he tried to give out one of the greatest of his brother's hymns, "Come, O Thou Traveler Unknown," and came to the lines,

"My company before is gone
And I am left alone with Thee,"

his voice broke, and sitting down, he buried his face in his hands.

Of John Wesley's old age we have pictures from many hands. John Hampson, who left the connection after the Legal Hundred had been appointed, has left a classic description of Wesley in his latter years:

The figure of Mr. Wesley was remarkable. His stature was of the lowest: his habit of body in every period of life, the reverse of corpulent, and expressive of strict temperance, and continual exercise, and notwithstanding his small size, his step was firm, and his appearance, till within a few years of his death, vigorous and muscular. His face, for an old man, was one of the finest we have seen. A clear, smooth forehead, an aquiline nose, an eye the brightest and the most piercing that can be conceived, and a freshness of complexion scarcely ever to be found at his years, and impressive of the most perfect health, conspired to render him a venerable and interesting figure. . . .

In dress, he was a pattern of neatness and simplicity. A narrow, plaited stock, a coat with a small upright collar, no

ANACREON

buckles at his knees, no silk or velvet in any part of his apparel, and a head as white as snow, gave an idea of something primitive and apostolical: while an air of neatness and cleanliness was diffused over his whole person.

In his old age, his "venerable figure" impressed all who saw him. In 1784, while Wesley was preaching in Scotland, a boy by the name of Walter Scott heard him more than once. Thirty-five years later, Sir Walter Scott wrote to Robert Southey, then writing his "Life of Wesley," that he had heard Wesley preaching from a chair in Kelso churchyard. Scott, too, spoke of the Methodist's venerable figure. The novelist had remembered the stories which the aged preacher told, and repeated one of them for Southey's benefit. "A drunken dragoon," Scott remembered Wesley to have said, "was commencing an assertion in military fashion, 'G—d eternally d—n me,' just as I was passing. I touched the poor man on the shoulder, and when he turned round fiercely, said calmly, 'You mean *God bless you.*'" . . . "In the mode of telling the story," added Scott, "he failed not to make us sensible how much his patriarchal appearance, and mild yet bold rebuke, overawed the soldier, who touched his hat, thanked him, and I think, came to Chapel that evening."

On October 15, 1790, the poet, George Crabbe, heard Wesley at Lowestoft. He noted his reverend appearance and cheerful air, and was particularly struck by the way in which Wesley quoted some lines

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

wherein he substituted his own name for that of
Anacreon:

Oft am I by woman told,
Poor Anacreon! thou grow'st old;
See, thine hairs are falling all!
Poor Anacreon! how they fall!
Whether I grow old or not,
By these signs I do not know;
But this I need not to be told,
'Tis time to *live*, if I grow old.

But if Anacreon grew old, he did not cease from work. On January 22, 1791 Wesley wrote a friend, "I am half blind and half lame; but, by the help of God, I work on still." The very next month, he visited the London society, to give them their quarterly tickets granting admission to the society meetings, as was his custom. His assistant would have dissuaded him from this task, but to no avail. The two, therefore, worked for three weeks "from early in the morning till late at night, until he had spoken to upwards of two thousand people."

On February 24, his diary ends abruptly. Wesley had already given over keeping his accounts. On July 16, 1790, he had written in his expense book, with trembling hand: "N. B. For upwards of eighty-six years [he probably meant sixty-eight], I have kept my accounts exactly. I will not attempt it any longer, being satisfied with the continual conviction, that I save all I can, and give all I can, that is, all I have."

A N A C R E O N

On the same day that the diary ended, Wesley wrote his last letter, to William Wilberforce, already parliamentary leader for the abolition of slavery:

MY DEAR SIR,—Unless the Divine Power has raised you up to be as Athanasius, *contra mundum*, I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise, in opposing that execrable villainy, which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils; but *if God be for you, who can be against you?* Are all of them together stronger than God? O! “*be not weary in well doing.*” Go on, in the name of God, and in the power of His might, till even American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun, shall vanish away before it.

Reading this morning a tract, wrote by a poor African, I was particularly struck by that circumstance,—that a man who has a black skin, being wronged or outraged by a white man, can have no redress; it being a *law*, in our colonies, that the *oath* of a black, against a white, goes for nothing. What villainy is this!

That He who has guided you, from your youth up, may continue to strengthen you in this and all things, is the prayer of, dear sir,

Your affectionate servant.

Already the writer had recalled the words of his aged father: “Time has shaken me by the hand, and death is not far behind.” On the next day after writing to Wilberforce, Wesley was taken ill. He was tenderly cared for by friends, who watched his

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

every movement and sought at once to gratify his wishes and to record all in their memory. On the day before he died, the old evangelist sat up and sang his version of Isaac Watts's hymn, "I'll praise my Maker while I've breath." He gave careful directions about his affairs, particularly enjoining that he be buried, as the law directed, in woolen garments. On the same evening, after vainly trying to speak, he cried out: "The best of all is, God is with us." During the night, he repeated many times the first words of the hymn, "I'll praise, I'll praise." At ten o'clock on the morning of Wednesday, March 2, 1791, he died without a groan or a sigh.

Careful directions in his will provided that there should be "no hearse, no coach, no escutcheon, no pomp, except the tears of them that loved me." Six pounds were left for six poor men who should carry him to the grave. His friends followed his directions as best their spirits would allow. After lying in state in the chapel at City Road, hung with black at an expense which would have wounded the soul of its builder, the body was laid away in the unconsecrated ground at the rear of the chapel. Six poor men carried him to his grave, and one of his preachers read the service with but one change in the ancient form. When he came to the words of the committal, "forasmuch as the spirit of our deceased *brother*," he paused and then read, "our deceased *father*," in a voice scarcely heard above the sobs of the congregation.

ANACREON

That the Methodist movement survived in England was due to the legal settlement which Wesley had given in the Deed of Declaration. For at once upon the founder's death, disputes arose: trustees of chapels demanded their "rights" in appointing preachers; and Henry Moore, Dr. Coke, and Dr. Whitehead began wrangling over the disposition of Wesley's papers, of which they were executors. The latter dispute was the more intense, since John Hampson was publishing his memoirs of Wesley, which had been written before the great Methodist's death. Not only was Hampson thus anticipating a profitable market, but he was treating his subject as very great, but very human; and of the latter most of the preachers would have none. At last they could picture Wesley as they would have the world see him, and to make assurance sure, honest John Pawson was soon sorting his master's papers in the City Road house. "The greater part of the papers," he explained later, "were old good-for-nothing letters,—not a few of which ought never to have been seen by any one but himself, and which I wonder he had not destroyed." What Wesley had failed to do, the cautious Pawson did for him. And the chimney of the modest home in City Road carried away the smoke from these "old good-for-nothing papers," including Wesley's Shakespeare with annotations in his own neat hand.

The men who survived to fight the battle of Methodism were good men, many of them capable,

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

some of them intelligent, and, within a few years, they had built a church—built, it must be said, on foundations laid by John Wesley himself. But the catholic-minded man, who had dreamed of a new world in which men might adventure in the spirit without clash of creed or order, was dead: and what he would have thought and said of the works of his successors no one will ever know.

12-12-1910
John Wesley
for John

APPENDICES

“AN ACCOUNT OF AN AMOUR OF JOHN WESLEY”

A SMALL quarto in the British Museum contains a manuscript with the title of this chapter. The writer had originally headed the book simply, “A Diary of John Wesley,” but on second thought preferred the more suggestive title. The one who gave the manuscript to the museum in 1788 certified to the fact that Noah Vazeille of Stratford in Essex, son of Mrs. John Wesley, had been the original owner, and to the further fact that some verses appended to the book are in the handwriting of John Wesley himself. This manuscript has been printed, but only under circumstances which have prevented any wide circulation.¹ Students of Methodism have been acquainted with it for nearly three quarters of a century, but the general public has had no opportunity of studying one of the most revealing documents ever written by a public man.

The manuscript is Wesley’s full account of the Grace Murray episode, and those who have had a taste of the

¹ Professor Augustin Leger, of Brest, used this manuscript as the basis of a dissertation, and later reprinted it in a delightful little book called “Wesley’s Last Love” (London, 1910). It is unfortunate that Leger’s book is not more widely known. The present transcript is made from a photostat of the original in the British Museum. The abbreviations have been resolved, the capitalization and punctuation modernized, but the original spelling has been retained.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

great man's methods in love will need no persuasion to read his own record of his best-advertised love-affair. Few men have ever set down so fully and frankly their most intimate thoughts, and few have so vividly, if unconsciously, revealed their personalities. Alike to the student of group movements, to the psychologist, and to the lover of all that is starkly human, this document will have its own appeal. It is reprinted here not because it is most representative of Wesley, but because both for students and others it gives an insight into his character not easily gained elsewhere. In addition, Grace Murray's story will, I think, be welcomed particularly by those interested in the psychology of religion.

The manuscript is not in Wesley's handwriting, but has been corrected by him; and its authenticity is admitted by all modern Methodist historians.

What Thou dost I know not now; but I shall know hereafter!

1. In June 1748 we had a Conference in London. Several of our brethren then objected to the *Thoughts Upon Marriage*,¹ and in a full and friendly debate, convinced me that a believer might marry without suffering the loss in his soul.

2. In August following I was taken ill at Newcastle. Grace Murray attended me continually. I observed her more narrowly than ever before, both as to her temper, sense and behaviour. I esteemed and loved her more and more. And when I was a little recovered, I told her, sliding into it I know not how, "If ever I marry, I think you will be the per-

¹ Wesley's pamphlet advocating celibacy.

APPENDICES

son." After some time I spoke to her more directly. She seemed utterly amazed, and said: "This is too great a blessing for me: I can't tell how to believe it. This is all I could have wished for under Heaven —if I had dared to wish for it."

3. From that time I conversed with her as my own. The night before I left Newcastle, I told her, "I am convinced God has called you to be my fellow-labourer in the gospel. I will take you with me to Ireland in spring. Now we must part for a time. But if we meet again, I trust we shall part no more." She begged we might not part so soon, saying "It was more than she could bear." Upon which I took her with me through Yorkshire and Derbyshire, where she was unspeakably usefull, both to me and to the societies. I left her in Cheshire with Jn. Bennet and went on my way rejoicing.

4. Not long after I received a letter from J[ohn] B[enne]t and another from her. He desired my consent to marry her. She said "she believed it was the will of God." Hence I date her fall. Here was the first false step, in which God permitted indeed, but not approved. I was utterly amazed; but wrote a mild answer to both, supposing they were married already. She replied in so affectionate a manner that I thought the whole design was at an end.

5. John Bennet afterwards told me that on the very night after he had engaged to G[race] M[urray], just after he lay down in bed and before he had

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

slept at all, he saw her sitting as in deep distress. Mr. W. came to her with an air of tenderness and said, "I love thee as well as I did on the day when I took thee first." But she put him away from her with her hand. In the morning, instead of writing to me, he asked her, "Is there not a contract between you and Mr. W.?" Partly out of love to him, partly out of fear of exposing me, she replied, "There is not." This was doubtless another false step. He that standeth let him take heed least he fall! ✓

6. She felt the effects of this all the winter, being under racking uncertainty of mind. When she received a letter from me she resolved to live and die with me, and wrote to me just what she felt. When she heard from him, her affection for him revived, and she wrote to him in the tenderest manner. In February particularly she sent him word, "that if he loved her, he should meet her at Sheffield, for she was sent for to Ireland, and, if he did not come now, she could not answer for what might follow."

One cannot excuse her behaviour all this time. Doubtless she should have renounced one or the other. But those who know human nature will pity her much, at least as much as they will blame her.

7. J[ohn] B[ennet] determined to meet her at Sheffield. But just as he was taking horse, one brought him word, "He must come away directly for his brother-in-law was dead." So Gr[ace] M[urray], seeing nothing of him, came on to Bristol. There I talked with her at large. She told me

APPENDICES

what had past between her and J. B. and seemed to think that contract was binding. But she was quite convinced it was not when I reminded her of what had past before between her and me, adding that, "till now, all this had seemed to her as a dream, nor could she possibly think what I proposed would ever come to pass; and that the difficulty was the greater because she could not consult with any living soul for fear of betraying or displeasing me."

8. We passed several months together in Ireland. I saw the work of God prosper in her hands. She lightened my burthen more than can be exprest. She examined all the women in the smaller societies and the believers in every place. She settled all the women-bands, visited the sick, prayed with the mourners, more and more of whom received remission of sins during her conversation or prayer. Meantime she was to me both a servant and friend, as well as a fellow-labourer in the gospel. She provided everything I wanted. She told me with all faithfulness and freedom if she thought anything amiss in my behaviour. And (what I never saw in any other to this day) she knew to reconcile the utmost plainness of speech with such deep esteem and respect as I often tremble at, not thinking it was due to any creature, and to join with the most exquisite modesty a tenderness not to be exprest.

9. The more we conversed together, the more I loved her; and, before I returned from Ireland, we contracted by a contract *de præsenti*: all this while

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

she neither wrote to J. B. nor he to her, so that the affair between *them* was as if it had never been.

10. We returned together to Bristol. It was there or at Kingswood that she heard some idle tales concerning me and Molly Francis. They were so plausibly related that she believed them, and, in a sudden, vehement fit of jealousy, writ a loving letter to J. B. Of this she told me the next day in great agony of mind; but it was too late. His passion revived, and he wrote her word "he would meet her when she came into the North."

11. We came to London. Talking with an intimate acquaintance there, she hinted, as a distance, "that Mr. W[esley] loved her." E. M.¹ replied, "Sister M[urray], never think of it. I know you thoroughly. It will never do. The people here would never suffer you. And your spirit would not bear their behaviour. You have not humility enough, or meekness, or patience; you would be miserable all your life. And that would make him miserable too; so that, instead of strengthening, you would weaken his hands. If you love yourself, or if you love him, never think of it more."

12. This sunk deep, and the more because she durst not tell me of it. Soon after, we set out for the North. At Epworth, in Lincolnshire, J. B. met us. I was beginning to speak to him freely; but when he told me "she had sent him all my letters," with several other circumstances of the same kind, all

¹ Some member of one of the London societies.

APPENDICES

which I then believed to be true, I stopt and said no more. I saw, if these things were so, he had the best right to her. So I thought it better to bear the blame than to lessen his affection for her. I judged it right that they should marry without delay, and wrote her word in the morning, "I thought it was not proper that she and I should converse any more together." ✓

13. She ran to me in an agony of tears and begged me "not to talk so, unless I designed to kill her." She uttered many other tender expressions. I was distressed exceedingly. Before I was recovered, J. B. came in. He claimed her as his right. I was stunned and knew not what to say, still thinking, "she loves him best; and why should I speak to lay a ground of future uneasiness between them?" Compassion likewise and love to her swayed me much, observing she was sorrowful almost to death and fearing, "if each insist on his claim, it will be cutting her in sunder; she can never survive it; she will die in the contest." So I again determined to give her up.

14. In this purpose I went home. I felt no anger, no murmuring or repining, but deep anguish of spirit from a piercing conviction of the irreparable loss I had sustained. I had no design to converse with her any more; but, about two, one brought me word, "S[ister] Murray is exceeding ill; she is obliged to keep her bed." I then believed it right to visit her. When I came, she told me in terms, "My dear Sir, how can you possibly think I love any other bet-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

ter than you? I love *you* a thousand times better than ever I loved J. B. in my life. But I know not what to do. I am afraid if I don't marry him, he will run mad." She shewed me a letter he had just sent her, which confirmed that fear. In the evening, he came himself; and then, he on one side and David Trathen¹ on the other, continued urging her, telling her they would not go all night unless they had an answer, till at length she said, "I will marry J. Bt."

15. The next morning, she told me what had past. I was more perplexed than ever. As I now knew she loved me, and as she was contracted to me before, I knew not whether I ought to let her go. For several days I was utterly unresolved, till, on Wednesday, September 6, I put it home to herself, "Which will you chuse?" And she declared again and again, "I am determined by conscience, as well as inclination, to live and die with *you*."

16. We came to Newcastle the same evening. The next day, I wrote to J. B. as follows:

Newcastle upon Tyne

Sept. 7, 1749.

My Dear Brother.

1. The friendship between you and me has continued long. I pray God it may continue to our lives' end!

But, if I love you, I must deal plainly with you.

¹ One of Wesley's preachers.

APPENDICES

And surely you desire I should. O that you would consider what I say, with meekness and love and with earnest, continual prayer to God!

2. You exprest a willingness, some years ago, to be one of my helpers in the work of the gospel. I gladly received you into the number, and you objected to none of the rules whereby they act. If you had, you might have continued at your own place in friendship, though not in union with me.

3. As one of my helpers, I desired you, three years ago, to assist me at Newcastle. In my house there, I had placed a servant whom I had tried several years and found faithful in all things. Therefore, I trusted her in the highest degree, and put her in the highest office that any woman can bear amongst us.

4. Both by the nature and rules of your office, you was engaged to do nothing of importance without consulting me. She was likewise engaged by the very nature of hers, as well as by the confidence I reposed in her, to consult me in all things, to take no step of any moment without my knowledge and consent; over and above which, she was peculiarly engaged hereto by her own voluntary and express promise.

5. Notwithstanding this, you was scarce out of my house when, without ever consulting me, you sollicited her to take a step of the last importance without my consent or knowledge. You whom I had trusted in all things thus betrayed your trust, and moved her

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

to do so too. You to whom I had done no wrong, wronged me, and that in an uncommon manner. You endeavoured, at a time when I expected nothing less, to rob me of a most faithfull and most usefull servant, the fellow to whom, for the work committed to her care, I knew not where to find in three kingdoms.

6. Last autumn, I observed her more narrowly and perceived she was such a person as I had sought in vain for many years, and then determined never to part with. I told her this, but told her withall, "I could not as yet proceed any farther, because I could do nothing without consulting my brother, as he had done nothing without consulting me." She answered, "It was so great a blessing that she knew not how to believe it. It seemed all as a dream." I repeated it again, and there was no shadow of objection made.

7. I told her farther, "I am convinced it is not the will of God that you should be shut up in a corner. I am convinced you ought to labour with me in the gospel. I therefore design to take you to Ireland in spring. Now we must be separate for a season; but, if we meet again, I trust we shall part no more." And from this time, I looked upon her as my own, and resolved that nothing but death should part us.

8. Three days after I left her, without ever consulting me, you sollicited her again, and, in a few days more, prevailed upon her to comply and promise marriage to *you*.

APPENDICES

9. That very night, God warned you in a vision or dream, of one who had a prior right, but whom, at your instance, she pushed away. Yet you construed it in quite another manner.

10. However, thus far you went: you asked her (instead of me), "whether there was any such engagement." Partly out of fear, partly out of love blinding her eyes, she replied "There was not." And 'tis true, there was not so explicit an engagement as would stand good in law; but such an one there was as ought in conscience to have prevented any other, till it should be dissolved.

11. Upon her return from Ireland, God again interposed, by means of those who were near you.¹ But you construed this likewise your own way. You rushed forward, and, by vehement importunity, forced her tender and compassionate mind to promise you again.

12. Now, my brother, pray earnestly that God would shew you and me what is right in this matter.

Was not your very first step wrong? Was it acting faithfully, even as a friend, to move such a thing without my consent or knowledge?

Was it not much more wrong, considering you as an helper, who, as such, ought to do nothing without my advice?

Was you not hereby tempting her likewise to do extremely wrong, who was likewise engaged even as

¹ Wesley refers to the death of Bennet's brother-in-law. See page 261.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

a friend, but much more as an house-keeper, to take no step without first consulting me?

Was not all this quite unjust and unkind, as well as treacherous and unfaithfull?

13. Was the second step any better than the first? the solliciting her in Derbyshire, to act without the consent of a father, and more than a father? the endeavouring to rob your brother and your friend of his faithfull servant, of the fellow-labourer in the gospel whom he had been forming to his hand for ten years? Was this consistent either with gratitude or friendship? nay, with common justice or humanity?

14. Was the third step any better than the rest, the extorting that second promise? I doubt still whether a thousand promises can bind to a thing evil and wrong in itself.

O, that you would take Scripture and Reason for your rule, instead of blind and impetuous passion! I can say no more—only this—you may tear her away by violence; but my consent I can not, dare not, give: Nor, I fear can God give you his blessing."

This Wm. Shent promised to deliver with his own hand, but it was not delivered at all.

17. In the afternoon, without any importunity or constraint, she wrote a letter to J. B. The purport of it was, "That she was more and more convinced, both he and she had sinned against God in entering on any engagement at all without Mr. W.'s knowledge and consent."

APPENDICES

18. Friday, September 8, we set out for Berwick, visiting all the intermediate societies. Every hour gave me fresh proof of her usefulness on the one hand and her affection on the other. Yet I could not consent to her repeated request, to marry immediately. I told her, before this could be done, it would be needfull: (1) to satisfy J. B.; (2) to procure my brother's consent; and (3) to send an account of the reasons on which I proceeded to every helper and every society in England, at the same time desiring their prayers." She said she should not be willing to stay above a year. I replied, "Perhaps less time will suffice." ✓

19. While we were at Berwick, I wrote down a short account of the more remarkable passages of her life. O, how has God fed thee with bread of adversity, and with water of affliction! This indeared her to me more than before, and, at the same time, strongly inclined me to believe that this severe discipline was designed to prepare her for a comforter of many, a mother in Israel. ✓

20. That account is as follows:

1. I was born January 18, 1715-16, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. My parents feared God, but were much distracted with worldly cares and business. My father spoke to me early of the things of God, which began to make an impression upon me when I was scarce four years of age, so that I was soon taken notice of for uncommon seriousness. This was

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

the more observed because my brothers and sisters were little concerned about religion. When I was about four years old, I dreamed I saw God sitting upon his throne, coming down to judge the world. I was much terrified, till I thought He smiled upon me, on which my fears vanished away. From that time, the thoughts of death and judgment were often strong upon my mind, which made me earnest to serve God, and carefull to avoid whatever I believed to be displeasing to him.

2. About six, I began to love going to church, which I had been accustomed to long before. I likewise loved reading the Bible, and frequently read six or seven chapters together. When I read or heard of the sufferings of Christ, I often was deeply affected, though I considered him only as a Good Man, who suffered wrongfully. In reading the Epistles of St. Paul, I many times stopt, and said, "I don't understand this. What does it mean?" But there was none to inform me, so that I was obliged to rest contented.

3. When I was about seven years old, as I was one day in St. Andrew's Church, I felt my soul over-powered with the love of God, and I loved all mankind. All my affections seemed changed; I wanted to be there always. These impressions remained upon my mind for a long time, and, indeed, were never wholly effaced. But the love of God revived in me from time to time, though I knew nothing of the truth as it is in Jesus.

APPENDICES

4. In the mean while I found a continual desire of doing good to all, especially the poor. From this principle, I gave away whatever money was given me and any thing else which I could spare; and indeed more, at some times, than I ought to have done, when I took bread or meat, even without the knowledge of my mother, to feed one or two of our poor neighbours who I knew were ready to perish.

5. I believe I might be between 8 and 9 years old when I was sent to the dancing-school. The company here wore away, by swift degrees, whatever God had wrought in my soul. My love and desire of heavenly things cooled and abated more and more ; and I began to love dress, company, and innocent diversions (so-called) of every kind. Yet for some years, I retained my love of going to church; till, about 14 or 15, this also gave place, and I used to spend a considerable part of the Lord's Day in walking in the fields.

6. When I was about 16, I fell into an acquaintance with a young man whose affections were soon fixed upon me. By that means, I grew still cooler and cooler to the things of God. I conversed with him about two years, at the end of which he much pressed me to marriage. But to this I was utterly averse, so that, by being importuned by him on one hand, and by my father on the other, I determined to escape from both and go to my sister at London.

7. I came to London in the beginning of sum-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

mer, 1734. After staying a month with my sister, I went into a service, w[h]ere I was used more like a child than a servant. Here I went frequently to church, but never to the sacrament, thinking I was not worthy. But, indeed, I did not think much about it, being swallowed up in worldly pleasures and diversions, and having rarely any serious thought concerning the world to come.

8. On the 13 of May, 1736, I was married to Mr. Murray. In three or four days, he went to sea and stayed about ten or eleven months. Soon after he was gone I went down to my father's, seeking rest but finding none. My husband was always before my eyes and engrossed all my thoughts. My continual fretting was the occasion of my miscarrying. Upon his return to London, I immediatly went up to him, where I was with him four months before he went to sea again, utterly thoughtless of God, as having given my heart to the creature instead of the Creator.

9. He left me with child again, but returned some weeks before I was brought to bed. In my labour, I found myself afraid to die, and yet had a trust in God. But when I recovered, my husband again had my heart and banished all other thoughts. The next year, he sent for me down to Portsmouth, where we lodged at a gentlewoman's house, who went constantly to church and Sacrament and had prayers in her house thrice a day. This put me upon serious reflections on my past and present life, and upon

APPENDICES

earnest prayer that God would enable me to serve him and supply in me whatever he saw was wanting.

10. The desires and resolutions which were now wrought in my soul never wholly died away. As I was returning some weeks after to London, I saw large numbers of people flocking together upon Kennington Common. I asked what was the matter and was answered, "A gentleman, one Mr. Whitefield, was going to preach there." I had a great desire to hear him, but my husband being unwilling, I would not disoblige him. However, that desire never left me, though I could give little reason for it. ✓

11. In a month, my husband went to sea, and a fortnight after my child died. As I looked at her, laid out upon the table, the thoughts of death seized strongly upon me. This was followed by strange lowness of spirits without any intermission. Every thing looked dark and gloomy; I could take pleasure in nothing, nor could any company divert me. My sister strove to divert me as much as she could, but it was all in vain. At last I told her, "I think it is my soul." At which she broke out in amazement, "Nay, if your soul is not safe, who have lived so harmless, what will become of me?" But notwithstanding all she could say or do, my heaviness increased more and more. i

12. While I was thus, a young woman sent to me one day to ask if I would go with her to hear Mr. W[hitefiel]d preach. I gladly consented, and went with her to Blackheath. Several were sitting

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

on the mount and singing. My heart was melted down as soon as I heard them, and I felt a sweet-ness I had never felt before. I looked up and wondered where I was. When Mr. Wh. came, I thought there was something in his look which I had never seen. He preached on John 3.8. I listened and liked all I heard, but I understood it not. However, I found my heart wholly drawn toward God, and I began to seek him with all my strength.

13. I went to hear him again on the 3 following days, on the last of which he preached his farewell sermon. When he was gone away, in order to im-bark for Georgia, I was utterly disconsolate again. I wept much in secret; I walked up and down, but could find no comfort. I spent much time in the churchyard, reading the inscriptions on the tomb-stones and then standing and crying over my child's grave. My sister laboured more than ever to divert me, fearing I should lose my senses. And once she persuaded me to go into merry company who were met together to dance. But no sooner did I rise to dance with them than my knees smote together, and all desire of all worldly diversions and pleasures was taken away from me in that moment.

14. The next Saturday, the young woman sent to me again, to tell me Mr. Wesley was come and was to preach in the fields the next morning. I slept little that night. I rose at 3, and about 4 set out, though I knew not where Moorfields was. I overtook a woman going thither, who shewed me the way.

APPENDICES

When Mr. W. stood up and looked round on the congregation, I fixt my eyes upon him and felt an inexpressible conviction that he was sent of God. And, when he spoke those words, "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God," they went through me like a dart, and I cried out, "Alas, what shall I do? How shall I be born again!" After the sermon, a young woman (Maria Price), seeing me all in tears, asked, "What is the matter with you?" I said, "I don't know." She said, "I will tell you. The hammer of God's love is breaking your heart. Only follow on to know the Lord." She spoke many other sweet words. I went home a mere sinner, now knowing what I wanted, an atonement for my sins.

15. My understanding was now opened so that I comprehended all I heard, as much as if I had studied it several years. And from this time I omitted no opportunity of attending the preaching in every place. After I had done this for above two months, as I was one evening walking home, it came strongly into my mind, "Beware of false prophets. How do you know but these are the men?" I came home in great trouble, cried earnestly to God to shew me the right way, and then gave myself up to search the Scriptures; in doing which I was so fully satisfied the doctrine was of God that I could no longer entertain a moment's doubt concerning it.

16. My convictions continually increased, till the night Mr. W[esley] preached his last sermon at

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Fetter Lane, before his return to Bristoll. I heard it, but my heart was hard as a stone, so that I was quite amazed at myself. As I stepped off the bench in order to go home, suddenly I was struck down and fell to the ground. I felt as if my heart was bound round with an iron girdle; I knew myself to be a lost, damned sinner, without Christ, without faith, hanging over the mouth of hell, and yet sustained in an inexpressible manner by I knew not what or whom. I could not speak nor cry out, but only groan to God. Thus I continued for half an hour, and then cried out, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" When I was a little recovered, two of our sisters made a shift to lead me home.

17. The next afternoon, just as Mr. W[esley] began his sermon at Paneridge, I was taken in the same manner. I felt the wrath of God abiding on me and my soul drawing nigh unto hell. I could now neither eat, nor drink, nor sleep, nor do any kind of business. I mourned day and night, till one advised me to read the third chapter of Jeremiah. While I read, I found an hope spring up, that God would have mercy upon me, which never ceased from that hour, though mean while I was as sensible as ever of my lost estate.

18. Mr. W[esley] went out of town on Monday. On the Monday following, about noon, I was sitting in my own house with Maria Price, reading the fifth chapter of the Romans, when in a moment all

APPENDICES

things became new. I seemed to have new eyes and a new understanding. I saw all I read in a new light. My burthen dropped off. My soul was in peace. My fears were all gone. And I said to her, "Now I know God is my God, and he has forgiven my sins." She replied, "Then be sure you hold fast your confidence." It was not long before I found her caution needful, it being strongly suggested, "How could it be that God should forgive such a sinner?" This threw me into a agony of prayer, in which I had not continued long before I cryed out, "Now I know, God is *my* God; I know for Christ's sake he has forgiven *me*. I care not if all the devils in hell and all the men upon earth were to deny it."

19. I could not conceal what God had done. I went immediatly and told my sister. But she desired I would keep my madness to myself and not make her mad too. Yet I could not refrain from declaring the goodness of God wherever I came, whether they would hear or forbear. I could have even gone into the streets to call sinners to repentance and proclaim the Saviour of sinners. I had an insatiable thirst for the salvation of all men which constrained me to stop any loose women I met, and even to seek them at their houses, and beseech them to turn to God. I had no fear nor any shame in the cause of God, but exhorted rich or poor, as they came in my way, without respect of persons, to break off their sins and believe in the Lord Jesus.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

20. One day, Mrs. Harvey desired me to go with her and see a poor man that was near death. I asked him, "Are you afraid to die?" He replied, "O yes, for I am a vile sinner. I have committed all manner of sins, I am lost. I am going to hell." I said, "But Christ died for *you*, and has bore all *your* sins." He answered, "What, Christ die for *me*, for *me*!" After speaking a few words, I went to prayer, and he broke out, "He did; he did! I feel he did!" and died singing praise to God.

21. For four months, I went on rejoicing and praising God, and finding it my meat and drink to do his will, though I had now and then some doubts; but they continued not, nor interrupted my peace or love. I was then one day making my bed, with my heart full of prayer, when the power of God fell upon me, and I cried out, "My Father, my Father," and dropped down to the ground. I saw (but in a manner no tongue can express) God the Father looking upon me through his Son as if I never had committed any sin. I saw the Son as one with the Father, and yet distinct from him. My soul went up in an even stream to God. I saw him indeed gracious and merciful, and was filled with such a reverential love as it had not entered into my heart to conceive. And this glorious sight was always before my eyes for more than a year, so that I walked as on the clouds and had both sin and temptation under foot.

22. During this time, I was informed my hus-

APPENDICES

band was taken by the Spaniards. I calmly replied, "The will of God be done." I went into my chamber and was pouring out my soul in prayer, when I saw (as in a vision) my husband pursued by his enemies, but escaping from them. I could have no doubt but it was so. I felt no fear, but left him in the hands of God.

23. When he returned, he sent for me down to the ship. Almost as soon as I came on board, I heard several cursing and swearing, which I could not bear. After a time, I heard my husband swear. I told him, "My dear, you must not swear before *me*." He stared but said nothing. I added, "I can't stay here. 'Tis like an hell to me." He said, "What is come to you? What, are you got converted?" I replied, "You have need to be converted too." We went home, and, after a while, he walked to see my brother and sister, who told him, "We are glad to see *you*, but we are sorry for you on the account of your poor, mad wife. She goes to hear those Methodists." He came back to me and asked "If I heard Mr. Whitefield." I answered, "I did, till he went away. And now I hear Mr. Wesley." He swore, "I should hear him no more." I replied, "You are the lord of my body, but Christ is the Lord of my soul. If I were to yield to you in this, I should lose my soul, and my blood would be upon your head." He stamp and raved and swore, "You shall leave them or me." I answered, "I love *you* above any one on earth. But I will leave *you* and

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

all that I have sooner than I will leave Christ."

24. He went to my brother again to consult what to do, and told me (at his return), "You are utterly distracted, and I am determined to send you to the mad house in West-Gardens. It is for your own sake as well as mine. You have made me unhappy and yourself too." I replied, "I am not unhappy. I was never so happy in my life. I never knew what happiness meant till I heard Mr. Wesley. I am ready to go, not only to prison but to death. I know in whom I have believed, and am confident he would give me to confess him in the flames." He walked to and fro, and said, "And can you leave me then?" I said, "Rather than I will leave Christ." He said, "Then to the mad house you must go." So he turned and went down stairs.

25. I immediately fell to prayer, and had a confidence given me that he could not proceed. In a quarter of an hour, he came back and said, "I can not bear to put you in a mad house. But neither can I bear to see your utter ruin. You have almost ruined yourself already, and, if you are resolved to go on thus, I will leave you. I will go as far as ship can sail." I told him, "I can not help it. I could lay down my life for you, but I can not destroy my soul. If you are resolved to go, you must go. I give you up to God."

26. Perceiving he could not prevail by this means, he soon after tried another. He gave me good words, offered me whatever I would have, and en-

APPENDICES

deavoured by all manner of persuasion to make me "keep to my Church and leave these people." But herein also God was my helper. He then stayed at home on purpose to keep me there. But one afternoon I asked him to let me go out. He said, "What, to the Foundery?" I answered, "Yes." He replied, "No, indeed he never would." Yet in less than an hour, he said, "Go: but you will see what will follow." When I came thither, the people flocked round me and exhorted me to remain stedfast. And God greatly refreshed me, so that I went home full of joy and prayer and thanksgiving. I found my husband at the door, but God had softened his heart so that he gave me not one harsh word.

27. Soon after, I fell sick and in a few days kept my bed. He would fain have had a physician, but I would not. I would fain have conversed with some of the children of God, but this he would not consent to. He asked one day if I would have him read by me. I said, "With all my heart." He read till the tears ran down his cheeks, and he said, "Send for whom you have a mind." Mrs. Holton came up stairs just then. The very sight of her refreshed me. She sat with me a while, and from that very time I amended every day.

28. She left me one of Mr. Whitfield's *Journals*. He came in, took it up, and opened where it is said, "I know God has forgiven me my many and great sins; but I cannot forgive myself." The tears started into his eyes, and he said, "If these good men talk so,

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

what must I do, for I am a sinner indeed?" I clapped my hands and began praying earnestly for him. He went on, "I think you are in the right. I fear I have been fighting against God. If it please God to raise you up again, I will never hinder you more."

29. From this time he was more and more convinced of sin. He searched the Scriptures much, willingly heard me read and talk as I was able of the things of God. He gladly received any that feared God, listened to them with deep attention, and desired nothing so much as to know Jesus Christ and him crucified.

30. I was all this time weak in body, but my soul was full of love and peace and power. In the year 1740, the apothecary told my husband, "If anything would recover me, it would be my native air." Upon this he prest me to go down to Newcastle. With much difficulty he prevailed. My father (who had long thought me mad) was soon convinced I spoke the words of truth and soberness. And so was a young man, John Brydon, who was shortly after a living witness of it. The rest of our neighbours agreed we were all beside ourselves, and cared for none of these things.

31. Here I received a letter from my sister, informing me that my husband had been taken by the Spaniards, but was now in Yarmouth road returning home. This was in November. Just then was the great storm, in the midst of which my mother told me, "You must not expect to see your

APPENDICES

husband any more." I answered, "The will of the Lord be done," and found my soul in perfect peace. But I continued instant in prayer, and, in a few days, it was clearly shewn me he would return; and I said to my mother one morning, "This day I shall see my husband." About 4 in the afternoon, he knocked at the door. I dropped down, but soon rose again and praised God.

32. Three days after, my father was taken ill. I was thoroughly convinced he would not recover. He lay sick about eight days. On the eighth day, I was above stairs when the power of God came upon me in an uncommon manner with those words, "It is finished; it is done." I went down immediatly and found him quietly resigning his spirit into the hands of God.

33. In the beginning of the year 1741, we returned to London. I was brought to bed in May following. My husband followed the home trade, that he might be with me till my time was over. A day or two after I was delivered, a neighbour came in but seemed afraid to speak. I told her, "Don't be afraid. I know what is the matter. My husband is prest.¹ God's will be done." She seemed amazed, but it was no burden to me. I knew not then what murmuring meant; I never felt any discontent or anger, nor repining at God or man.

34. In August, my husband sailed for Virginia. I went down to him to the ship at Deptford and stayed

¹ *i. e.*, conscripted for a man-of-war.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

with him there two or three days. He saw that I was uneasy and said, "My dear, I see you can't bear this place. You shall go home. I will set you forward." As we were walking, he said, "I am a great sinner. Command me to the prayers of all your people." I then found great power to speak to his heart. He wept much till we were forced to part. After going a little way from me, he came back, and said, "He knew not how to leave me." He went on with me a while; I felt an uncommon weight, and the same was on him likewise. But still I could give him up to God, without one discontented thought.

35. I felt a daily increase of peace and love till the latter end of May, 1742. About that time I was one night just laid down, when I felt a weight come upon my feet. I thought the cat had come upon me, and strove to push her off. Presently, I felt it rising higher and higher by my side till it seemed to lie by me at the full length of a man. I felt an awe, but no fear, praying continually and knowing I was in the hands of God. After a few minutes, it rolled off and fell upon the ground. I fell asleep and dreamed I saw my husband lying in his coffin. I cried and asked, "Will not you speak to me?" He just lifted up his eyes and shut them again. I waked in great trouble, slept again and dreamed the same dream. When I waked, I was convinced my husband was dead; but I was so filled with God that at this time nothing could disturb or interrupt my happiness in him.

APPENDICES

36. The ship did not return till October following. I had been visiting one that was sick, being full of love and trampling upon all below, when a messenger told me the *Prince Frederick* was in the river. I hastened home, having my soul stayed on God. Presently after, the cook's wife came in and said, "Mrs. M., I have been on board the ship and I saw your husband well." I said, "No, my husband is not in the ship, but let us take a boat and go aboard." My sister and I did so. When we came along side the ship, one of the sailor's wives cried out, "Mrs. M., do not come here. Go ashore. Pray, go ashore." I said, "Well, let us go ashore." As we were walking up the stairs, she said to my sister, "Mr. M. is drowned." I turned and said, "I hear what you say." But my soul was in peace. I rested in God. I felt the everlasting arms were round me.

37. When I came home, I was still in peace. But, after a time, I took my eye off of God and began to consider how tender a husband he had been and how he used to look and talk with me. Then Satan gained an advantage over me, and I shrieked out, "What! Must I see him no more?" Immediately the spirit of God withdrew from me, and I dropped down and lost my senses. They carried me into the next room and opened the window. When I looked up and saw the sky, I cried to God, "O, take all; only give me thyself and let me have my senses." For a week, I continued with only intervals of

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

sense, nor did I ever recover the memory I had before. As soon as I was able, I wrote to my mother and told her of my husband's death. In her answer she advised me to come to Newcastle. I asked Mr. W[esley]'s advice, whether I should or no. He told me, "He was going thither himself, and should be glad to meet me there."

38. I sailed from London the end of October, and came to Newcastle a few days before Mr. W[esley]. John Brydon came frequently to me at my mother's, but it was no temptation to me. God had restored my peace, and I desired nothing but him. Mr. W. then lodged at Edward Wilkinson's, where I was with him in the day and at my mother's at night. Mr. Smith and Mr. Downes came hither to Mr. W. and invited him to Horsey. He took me with him and left me there. I endeavoured to improve my time by speaking to every one I could, either at Horsley, or the neighbouring villages, as well as by praying with those of the society. And God was with us of a truth. Many were convinced of sin. James Watson and some others received remission of sins.

39. Mr. Downes used till now to read in the society. I asked him, "Will you not give us a word of exhortation?" He said, "I dare not." I replied, "Let us go to prayers. We will ask of God to open your mouth." I found great enlargement of heart in prayer. In the evening, he expounded our Lord's words to the Samaritan woman, and from this time

APPENDICES

he found no want of words; neither were his words without a blessing.

40. I came back to Newcastle about Christmas. Mr. W[esley] then lodged at Mr. Gun's, and Mr. Meyrick being sick in bed, Mr. W. desired me to take care of him. This occasioned my lodging in the house till he was well, and then returned to my mother's. Soon after Mr. Downes came for me, and carried me to Horseley. I stayed here two or three weeks, employed as before and with, at least, an equal blessing. I had been but a day or two at Newcastle when I was sent for to Tanfield-Leigh. After the sermon, I prayed with many of the society, and four received remission of sins. The next day I went to Tanfield and met most of the society, and God broke many of our hearts in pieces. During all this time, I had settled peace, a full confidence in God, a burning zeal for his glory, and a vehement desire to spend and be spent for all men. But I had not that love and comfort in God, that clear intercourse with him, neither that power to behold him with open face which I had so long enjoyed.

41. I was soon after appointed leader of several classes at Newcastle, till Mr. W[esley] advised me to go to London and bring down what I thought best of my goods, that I might then live altogether at his house. Accordingly, I had agreed on my passage and was going down to Shields to take ship when a note was delivered me from Mr. W., desiring, "I would stay at London when I was there."

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

I was in amaze. I went up strait to Mr. W. and asked, "What was the matter?" He immediatly took me with him to S[ister] Jackson's, who accused me of speaking many things against her before John Brydon and several others. Mr. W. had them all face to face, and they wholly acquitted me of the charge. However, I retired to my mother's and came no more to Mr. W.'s, though I constantly attended both morning and evening preaching.

42. I was now more and more acquainted with John Brydon, and, though there never was any engagment between us, yet it was commonly supposed we were on the point to marry. Of this Mr. W. spoke to me one morning, and advised me to go into the country without letting him [Brydon] know where I went. Accordingly, I rode strait away to Tanfield and visited as many as I could all round. And we seldom met or parted without a blessing, so that the flame was kindled in every place.

43. In the beginning of April, 1743, Mr. W[esley] returned to London. I came thither soon after and was seized with a fever. I was in great heaviness of soul and cried to God, "Only let me know that I shall be saved at the last. I give up all things else into thy hands." Immediately the answer came, "Thou shalt be saved at the last, but it will be as by fire." And in all the doubts and fears which I have felt since then that word has been as an anchor to my soul, "Thou shalt be saved at the last."

44. In autumn, 1743, I returned to Newcastle,

APPENDICES

and a room was taken for me at Phyllis Gibson's. I now gave myself up altogether to the service of the church. Part of the week I spent with my classes and the sick, the other part I was in the country. I went to Tanfield first. Many of us met in the evening and, among the rest, a remarkable wild young man with whom I had talked before, a famous gamester, who said, "He desired to break it off, but it was impossible." I took the hymn book, but had scarce given out one line when an awe from God fell upon us all, so that I was constrained to say, "Be still, and know that God is in the midst of us." I then prayed. As soon as I named the young man, a cry ran through the whole assembly, Ann Laws and three or four others received a sense of the pardoning love of God, and the young man cried out, "I will game no more. I will serve God, I will serve God."

45. I stayed a year in Mr. W[esley]'s family,¹ dividing my time between the town and country. All this time I enjoyed a settled peace, but not such love and joy as in time past. Indeed, I found less of these from the very time when I began to labour for other souls, having usually a deep sense of my wants and ignorance and emptiness, then especially when God was pleased to work among the people in so surprizing a manner. I then felt myself stript, as it were, of all things; only I knew that God loved me.

¹ She refers to preachers and others who stayed at Wesley's "House" in Newcastle.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

46. Mr. W[esley] now coming to Newcastle, I desired to speak with him. I told him, "I could not stay in his family any longer, as being utterly unable to please S[ister] Jackson in any thing." He desired to hear us face to face. Mr. Meyrick and Westall were present. After we had had a full hearing, he consented I should go. So I had no farther concern in the family. ✓

47. While I was at Newcastle, John Brydon married and soon grew quite light and careless. This shocked me exceedingly; I was afraid his blood would be upon my head because I did not marry him. The more I reasoned, the more confused I was, till I had lost sight of God. Yet I could not be unemployed a moment, but was continually praying with and exhorting others. One day, as I was walking over the croft to meet my class, I felt a cloud fall in a moment, as it were, on my body as well as soul. An horrible darkness overwhelmed me, and I thought, "I am taking all this pains for God and for my soul; what if I have no soul? What if there be no God?" Immediately I looked up and said, "If I had no soul, how could I live or move? If there be no God, who spread out the Heavens like a curtain? who laid the foundations of the earth?" I then cried out aloud, "If thou be a God, save me!" But there was no answer. When I came to the stile, I was violently tempted to throw myself down and dash my brains out. I hastened on till I came into the passage leading to the Minor

APPENDICES

Chair, where an unspeakable horror fell upon me. I thought I had sinned so that God had quite forgotten me and given me up into the devil's hands. Nevertheless, I exhorted the class with all my might to cleave close to God; and afterwards began to say the Lord's Prayer, but I was stopped in the midst. I then desired that one of them would pray for me. None could, but they all burst into tears. At length, I forced myself to pray, and they were all overpowered with the presence of God. But I myself was dark still, and so weak in body that two were obliged to lead me home.

48. When I came home, I locked myself up in my room at P. Gibson's. I prayed with my lips (which I did almost continually), but I felt it not; my heart was quite froze; it was hard as the nether millstone. I read the Bible, but the promises were nothing to me; I could claim none of them. On the contrary, I took all the threatenings to myself; all was lamentation and mourning and woe. I saw nothing but hell before my eyes; I had no hope of escaping. Yet I abhorred sin; I could not bear to speak or hear an idle word, or to see anything light or trifling.

49. One morning. Mr. Maxfield was mentioning a predestinarian who died in deep despair. It immediately struck me, "So shall I. She said, God had created her to damn her. And so he did me. He determined to damn me, and therefore has given me up. And he gave me that grace and love which

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

I once had only to increase my damnation." And these thoughts I could never intirely shake off, but they pursued me day and night.

50. I was likewise grievously tormented with that scripture, Heb. 6. 4.¹ I knew I had tasted the good word and the powers of the world to come, and therefore believed that, seeing I was thus fallen away, it was impossible to renew me again to repentance, and that there remained nothing but a fearfull looking for of fiery indignation.

51. Indeed, I mourned and wept for God continually. But this gave me no manner of comfort, it being suggested, "Yes, so Esau mourned and wept, but he found no place for repentance; neither could he obtain the blessing he had cast away, though he sought it carefully with tears."

52. Many times such a slavish fear fell upon me that I thought I was just dropping into hell. I felt myself utterly banished from God. I remembered the days of old, when I saw the smiling face of God. But now I could not see him but as an angry judge. I had no spark of hope left, and saw nothing before me but the blackness of darkness forever. I wished I had never been born; I wished I had no soul; I wished I had been a beast or creeping thing.

¹ The passage to which she refers is Hebrews 6:4-6: "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame."

APPENDICES

Often I was so desperate as not to have a desire of salvation, not to care whether I was saved or damned. Sometimes I even wished to be in hell, that I might know the worst. And frequently, in the midst of all this, my body was so affected that the bed shook under me, and I felt as if one had begun at the crown of my head and flayed off my skin, yea my flesh and all, to the very soals of my feet.

53. I was one morning at breakfast at Mrs. Huntley's when I was seized in this manner. Hannah Jones saw my colour change and asked, "What is the matter?" I said, "I am not well." I rose up and hastened away to S[ister] Proctor's where my band was waiting for me. I threw myself on the bed and roared aloud for the disquietness of my soul. They were all frightened. I cried out, "Pray, Pray. Can none of you pray for me?" S. Proctor began. After she had spent some time, she broke off and said, "I can pray no more. I think your burden has come upon *me*." Ann Goodell then burst out into prayer. The power of God came down and struck that word to my heart, "This is the cup of which the Son of God drank. Wilt thou not drink of his cup?" I cried, "Lord, I will. If it be his cup, I *will* drink of it. Only give me thy strength." A little ray of hope then darted into my soul.

54. But this lasted not long. In a little time, I was again covered with thick darkness. The same week, some of my band came to see me at my mother's.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

While we were sitting at tea, I was seized as before with the same agony, both of body and soul. I set down my cup and desired we might pray. My mouth was filled with words, and all around me were melted into tears. But my heart was neither broken nor healed. I remained as dead and dry as ever; though I dared tell none how I was for fear of turning the weak or lame out of the way.

55. I often said, "O, that I had wings like a dove, that I might flee away and be at rest! That I might escape from all the busy ways of men, and be alone, where no eye might see me!" I wandered about in fields and solitary places, and would gladly have been always there. But I did not dare to forsake those who were committed to my charge, neither to stay away either from the morning or evening preaching. I likewise visited the sick, though I was myself shrunk almost into a skeleton, so that many used to ask me, why I came out, and told me I was fitter to be in bed than anywhere else.

56. About this time, I began to doubt, "Whether Christ was God," and to reason, "How he could be one with the Father." I reasoned till I had no light concerning him left, no more than if I had never believed. Then I thought, "How unmerciful God was, and how hard to be entreated, how cruelly he dealt with *me*," with a thousand other blasphemous imaginations. These arrows stuck faster and faster into my soul, and the poison of them drank up my spirits. Yet I kept all to myself, and was con-

APPENDICES

tinually exhorting others to believe in the name of the Son of God.

57. Nevertheless, God sometimes gave me refreshing sleep, though at other times my sleep departed from me. I likewise often mingled my meat with tears, and often forgot to eat my bread. Often I purposefully abstained from food, because of the saying of our Lord, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting"; and that for several days together. This I the more willingly did because I found it impaired my bodily strength, for I desired death rather than life; I loathed the thought of living long. Another reason of my frequent and long continued fast was that I might destroy whatever it was whereby I had been a snare to men, that I might never hurt any man more.

58. It was now the time of Lent, 1744, when I was much tempted, "not to eat any more." Under this persuasion I neither eat nor drank for several days, nor had any desire either of meat or drink. I felt no pain, only I grew weaker and weaker. But this was no concern to *me*. I was willing to leap into a fiery furnace, or to have my body cut in a thousand pieces, so my soul might only be saved at last. But immediately after receiving the Sacrament on Easter-day, the snare was broken. I prayed, as I could, that God would shew me his will, and for a time I had a little comfort.

59. Yet I soon grew darker and darker again, having no sight of God, no peace, no hope. How-

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

ever, I resolved to bring as many others to God as I could, and to live and die in his work, whatever became of me after death. With this view, I went one day to visit one in Sandgate. But it was vehemently suggested, "Why, what can you say to him? You know not God; you know not if there be any Christ." I came in and asked, "William, is the Son of Man risen upon your soul?" He said, "Not yet, but I believe he will soon." I prayed with him. His soul was filled with peace, and two or three days after, he quietly gave up his spirit to God.

60. The same night I was at home when the power of darkness fell upon me and overwhelmed both my body and soul. My spirit was wounded within me. My body felt as if it was all empty and burnt up, so that I could compare it to nothing but a piece of wood which had been burnt to a coal. The next day, I was in racking pain, and the next evening I was in the same condition as before. I continued thus till I fell asleep. But sleep brought no relief. I was scared with dreams and terrified with visions. And when the morning came, the light was as the shadow of death, and

"I waked to all the woes I left behind."

61. About Christmas, 1744, Mr. Brigs came down from London. As soon as I saw him in the desk, it was as it were whispered to me, "There is a messenger of God to thee for good." In the afternoon, John Nelson told us, "One of our brethren was come from London who would meet any of the

APPENDICES

bands that desired it." I desired he would meet mine. He did so in the morning, and a few days after (on my return from Horseley), we had much conversation together. I opened my whole heart to him, not willingly keeping back any thing. The more we conversed, the more my mind was eased. My doubt concerning the sins of John Brydon being imputed to me was now removed, and the horrible dread was taken away.

62. From this time (1745),¹ I began to hope against hope. But I now fell into sufferings of another kind. I was seized with an inexpressible sense of the judgments of God hanging over the nation. Everything I saw or heard, the very blowing of the wind, the waving of the trees, the murmuring of the water, seemed to speak the wrath of God and the heavy punishment he was about to bring on a people laden with iniquities. And as I was one morning alone, a dread fell upon me as if we were already to be destroyed. I thought the Papists were just going to swallow us up. I cried vehemently, "Lord, I am not fit to die, neither can I resist unto blood. But give me thy strength, and I will suffer all things."²

63. I continued groaning under these apprehensions till Mr. C[harles] W[esley] came to Newcastle. Under an exhortation he gave one night to the bands I received power to hope, and I went

¹ The date has been added above the line.

² Grace Murray's apprehensions were, of course, reflections of popular feeling occasioned by the fear of rebellion in the interest of the Stuarts and the Catholic party.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

home rejoicing in hope. But Satan soon thrust sore at me again, suggesting, "What pride and presumption it was, for such a sinner as me to hope for mercy." I cried out, "Well, Satan, if the Son of God will not save me, I am content to perish. And if my perishing will glorify God, I am content to go to hell." And I found a willingness in my inmost soul to suffer any thing which might glorify him, yea, if it were really for the glory of God, to remain in hell to all eternity.

64. Mr. W[esley] took me with him into several places in the country, and I found a continual increase of hope. And I never wanted power from God to pray with, and labour among the people. After he went away, I was meeting a band when, of a sudden, I was struck with sharp pain from the crown of the head to the soal of the foot. Immediately I was in a burning fever. At the same time, I felt a full and clear sense of the pardoning love of God, and I knew my soul was set at liberty and that Satan was departed from me. I saw all I had suffered had been for good. I saw God had been with me walking on the waters, and that when I went through the fires he had covered my head that I might not be consumed. I was carried home and kept my bed for 12 or 14 days. But pain was now nothing. I knew God. I rejoiced in God my Saviour. I glorified him in the fires. I was willing not only to die, but if it were his will, to live and suffer all my days.

APPENDICES

65. As soon as I was able to sit an horse, I went to Sheep-hill, where I recovered my strength in a few days, to the surprize of all that saw me. At my return to Newcastle, I gladly resumed my work of visiting the sick and attending my classes and bands. My labour was now again my delight. My soul was stayed upon God continually. I had no doubt of his love. I had no fear of his wrath and no desire but to do and suffer his will. I was more than ever before crucified to the world, and the world crucified unto me. I was free from every thing here below and wholly athirst for God, the living God.

66. In August, the rebellion broke out,¹ which was no surprize to *me*. Mr. [John] W[esley] came to Newcastle in September and in November set out for London. Soon after, in pursuance of his advice, I went to live at Sheep-hill. Three days in each week I was at home, the rest I usually spent in the societies. In December, Mr. W. wrote that I should go and take charge of the house at Newcastle. I was much averse to this at first, but was convinced in a moment that God had called me to it. So on Christmas Eve, I left Sheep-hill and came into the house on Christmas Day.

67. I found Mr. Shepperd ill in the house, but in a few weeks he recovered. Mr. Houghton then fell sick of a fever. For three weeks I was never undrest. But I wanted neither rest nor sleep. At least,

¹ The uprising under the Young Pretender, Charles Edward, who proclaimed his father at Perth, September 4, 1745.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

I felt no want till he recovered his health; and then I was taken with the fainting fits which never left me since. ✓

68. After Mr. W[esley] came, Mr. Houghton relapsed. I would have set up with him again, but Mr. W. absolutely forbad me to sit up any more than one night. Soon after he returned, Mr. Bennet was taken ill. I attended him likewise in his sickness. But the work was too hard for me, which being represented to Mr. W., he desired Sister Proctor to come into the house and help me. This was in spring, 1746. Having now one to assist in the business of the family, I divided my time: Saturday, Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday I usually spent at Newcastle; the rest of the week I spent in the country, visiting the bands, the classes, the sick, and the backsliders in each place. ✓

69. Mr. Westall was with us in summer, and in autumn was taken ill of a fever. When he began to recover, I fell down. I kept my bed about three weeks, but my soul was happy in God. I told S[ister] Proctor, "God has laid me upon this bed that I may have time for prayer." And my heart and mouth were filled with prayer continually. For great part of this time, it was imprest on my mind, with an unspeakable force, "That in three years I should see a great change," but of what kind it was to be I knew not.

70. When I began to recover, Mr. Westall and I went up together one night to the leads. As we

APPENDICES

were sitting, he told me how the devil had tormented him at Bristol, when he lay with Mr. [John] W[esley]. And immediatly he cried out, "He is not far from us now." I said, "I feel him near, but God is nearer than him." We came down into the kitchen and began to sing, but we knew not how to leave off. We continued singing and praying, one after the other, and did not rise till it was past 12 a clock. The same spirit of prayer was upon us the next day, Thursday, and so every day till the following Thursday, so that we could scarce do any thing but pray day and night, and continued therein twice till past two in the morning. On the 2d Thursday, the bands met. While Mr. W[estal]¹ paused, I was constrained to break out into loud prayer. A cry went forth. Many wept. Many praised God. All (but four) were filled with consolation. Mr. W[estal]¹ and I had begun fasting the day before. We tasted nothing till the next day, Friday evening. And we found no inconveniency to our bodies. But our souls were fed as with marrow and fatness. Eliz. Boomer was not at the bands, being confined in her own house. But she did not thereby lose her share of the blessing. She saw (as she afterward said) the glory of the Lord at that very hour resting upon the house, and was filled in an unusual manner with peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

71. On Saturday morning, Jane Tinkler and

¹ An "I" is added to the W in another hand, presumably Wesley's. The "Mr. W." was Mr. Westall, not Mr. Wesley.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Mary Armstrong came up after the preaching. S[ister] Tinkler had known the peace of God, but was now a sinner stript of all. S[ister] Armstrong had never known the peace of God, but was earnestly mourning after it. I cried to God, and was constrained to say in the midst, "Now, S. Tinkler, your soul is set at liberty." She instantly answered, "It is; it is. I taste the powers of the world to come." We then prayed for M. Armstrong. The answer soon came, and she also was set at liberty. We then prayed for my mother, for Mrs. Armstrong and her husband, that they might know in whom they had believed.¹ Mrs. Armstrong did not rest from that hour till she knew her sins were blotted out. Mr. Armstrong soon after died in peace, and, about the same time, my mother rejoiced in God her Saviour. After prayer, we went to breakfast, in the midst of which I cried out, "I see Mr. C[harles] W[esley]; he is not far off." And in a few minutes after, Mr. Wy. and Mr. Perronet came to the gate.

72. When he went away January, 1747, he asked me to go a day's journey with him. I said to S. Proctor, "I will put up a gown and some linnen, for I believe I shall see John Nelson's house before I see you again." We rode to Ferry-hill. Mr. W. then cast lots which of us, B[rother] Swindels or I, should go forward. The lot fell upon me. I went into Lincolnshire and Yorkshire, met the women

¹ The reference is to the Methodist doctrine that a Christian should have an "assurance" that his sins are forgiven.

APPENDICES

of the societies, and settled the bands. I found it was good for me to be among them and God gave us many blessings together.

73. In February I returned to Newcastle. Mr. [John] W[esley] came soon after, and spent part of the Lent there. After he went, Brother Hopper carried me to Allandale. Mr. Richards went with us and stayed 3 days. The night after he went back, the society met and we had just such a time as the Thursday night at Newcastle. Several were broken to pieces, and several healed. We met every night after, and had the same blessing. In the day time, partly the people came to me, partly I went to them. By this means I spoke with all of the society (as well as many others), and divided the believers into bands. I had at first designed to stay only a week; but the work of God so mightily prevailed, and the poor people were so importunate with me, that I could not break away till I had spent a month among them. My employment then was as usual, part of the week in town, the other part in the country societies.

74. This summer, 1747, B[rothers] Wheatley, Dunston, and Webster were all ill in the house together. Mr. Wheatley would suffer none but me to come near him, which confined me more than I desired and wore my body down till I was exceeding weak. About mid-summer, I went up to London. When I returned, some of our sisters began to be offended and to make many objections to me. I did

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

all I could to remove them. I called frequently upon them, and spoke as lovingly and plainly as I could. But it did not avail. They were still equally displeased and endeavoured to spread the same spirit among others. But I did not as yet perceive any resentment toward them, only I was grieved because they hurt their own souls.

75. The next Lent, 1748,¹ Mr. W. spent wholly in the North. He took me with him through all the country societies. At this our sisters were more offended than ever, and others soon caught the infection. This put me upon reasonings that profited nothing. Till now I had received all things, honour or dishonour, the good will or ill will of any as from the hand of God. But now I began to think, "How hard this is, to use me thus! After I have slaved for them so many years! Well, I will get out of it all. I will leave them to themselves. I will suffer this no longer." By this means I was fretted and weakened and was brought to think of what I had before cast far from me.

76. When Mr. [John] W[esley] came down in the latter end of the year,² and took me with him again into the country, the offence increased, and I looked at it more and more. It was now that Mr. W. being ill, I was obliged to be with him much, both day and night, and he spoke to me more freely

¹ In fact, Wesley spent Lent of 1747, not 1748, in the north.

² Grace Murray uses her words loosely. Wesley arrived in Newcastle on July 9, 1748. He was ill for six days during the first part of August.

APPENDICES

than ever before. But I could not believe even what I heard. It seemed too strange to be true. And all the time I was with him in his return, through Yorkshire and Derbyshire, I understood him not, not even when he said, "In spring you shall go with me to Ireland. We must part for a while. But if we meet again, I trust we shall part no more." ✓

77. The day after Mr. W. went away, Mr. B[ennet] proposed marriage to me. A day or two after, I consented, without asking Mr. W.'s advice. I then returned to Newcastle. After resting a week there, I visited all the societies in the South, settled the bands, and endeavoured to remove offences and regulate all things as well as I could. I then went the North Round, and stayed a week at Berwick. I was very ill when I came there. Two days I stayed within, and many came to me. The third night, I was under much concern and earnestly besought God to shew me for what end he had brought me to that place. It was then imprest on my mind to meet the class of children, which accordingly I did the next morning. As soon as I began to sing, the power of God was upon us, and increased more and more. We continued together till past 12 a clock, during which time God revealed his pardoning love to S[iste]r Archbold and 4 or 5 of the children, some of whom walk in the light to this day. ✓

Thus far her account.¹

¹ This sentence is in Wesley's hand.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

21.¹ We stayed here² from Saturday to Thursday, and the more I knew her, the more I loved her. She frequently told me, "In time past, I could have married another, if you would have given me away. But now it is impossible we should part; God has united us for ever." Abundance of conversation to the same effect we had in our return to Newcastle, where, on Sunday 17, we continued conversing together till late at night, and she gave me all the assurances which words could give of the most intense and inviolable affection. The same she renewed every day, yea every hour, when we were alone, unless when we were employed in prayer: which, indeed, took up a considerable part of the time we spent together.

22. On Monday and Tuesday, that I might be able to form a clearer judgment of her real character, I talked at large with all those who were disgusted at her, and inquired into their reasons for it. I found none of them new, except Sister Lyddel's, "That she had the impudence to ride into the town with Mr. W[esley] :" (which was accidentally true, Mr. P[erronet] and James Kirshaw having rode away from us). Mr. Williams accused of not lending his wife her saddle (being just going to take horse herself); Mrs. Williams, of buying a Holland shift (which was not true); Nancy and Peggy Watson, of buying a Joseph before she wanted it; Ann Mattison, of being proud and insolent; and Betty

¹ Wesley resumes his own account.

² Berwick.

APPENDICES

Graham, of buying an apron worth ten shillings (which, indeed, was not bought at all). I plainly perceived jealousy and envy were the real ground of most of these accusations, an idle, senseless prejudice of the rest. Offence taken, but not given. So that after all, her character appeared untouched, and for anything they could prove, she had done all things well.

23. Wednesday 20. Christopher Hopper met us at Horseley and guided us to Hinely¹ Hill. Understanding he knew J[ohn] B[ennet]'s design, I told him the whole affair. He was much moved and undertook to go himself to J. B. and try if he could not satisfy him. To this end he set out on Friday, intending to go on slowly so as to be at Chinley about Tuesday.

24. Thursday 21. At her request, we renewed the contract made in Dublin. B[rother] Hopper, observing her pause and tremble before she spoke the words, asked, "Sister M., have you any scruple upon your mind?" I added, "If you have the least scruple, I beg you would stop. Pray do." She cheerfully replied, "I have none at all," and then spoke the words immediately. An hour after, I took horse for Whitehaven, leaving her to examine and settle the women-bands in Allandale. She stood looking after me till I was up the hill. I had not one uneasy thought, believing God would give us to meet again at the time when he saw good.

¹ This is the amanuensis' interpretation of "Hindley Hill."

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

25. Yet from the time I came to Whitehaven, there was something hanging on my mind which I knew not how to explain. And the first night I lay there, I dreamed J. B. came to me. I asked him, "Where is S. Murray?" He replied, "At Chinley." I waked in a moment and (for that time) slept no more. I wrote to her on Saturday and was amazed at myself when I began my letter with those lines:

"There is I know not what of sad presage,
That tells me we shall never meet again."

But I endeavoured to cast it off, being persuaded that now neither life nor death could part us.

26. On Sunday, in the afternoon, I was calmly waiting upon God, when those words in the first lesson came as a sword to my heart, *Son of man, behold I take from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke.* Immediately a shivering ran through me, and, in a few minutes, I was in a fever. But when I came home, seeing a vast congregation in the market-place, I could not send them empty away. And while I was speaking to them God remembered *me* and strengthened me both in soul and body.

27. As soon as I had finisht my letter to J. B., on the 7th instant, I had sent a copy of it to my brother at Bristol. The thought of my *marrying* at all, but especially of my marrying *a servant* and one so *low-born*, appeared above measure shocking to him. Thence he inferred that it would appear so to all mankind, and consequently, that it would break

APPENDICES

up all our societies and put a stop to the whole work of God.

28. Full of this, instead of writing to me (who would have met him any where at the first summons), he hurried down from Bristol to Leeds. There he met with Robert Swindells and William Shent, who informed him (which he had heard slightly mentioned before), "That G. M. was engaged to J. B." This was adding oil to the flame, so he posted to Newcastle, taking with him William Shent, not many degrees cooler than himself.

29. Here he met with Jane Keith, a woman of strong sense and exquisite sublety. She had long been prejudiced against G. M., which had broke out more than once. She gave him just such an account as he wished to hear, and at his request, set it down in writing. The sum of it was: (1) that Mr. W. was in love with G. M. beyond all sense and reason; (2) that he had shewn this in the most publick manner and had avowed it to all the society; and (3) that all the town was in an uproar and all the society ready to fly in pieces.

30. My brother, believing all this, flew on for Whitehaven, concluding G. M. and I were there together. He reached it (with W. Shent) on Monday. I was not at all surprized when I saw him. He urged, "All our preachers will leave us, all our societies disperse, if I married so mean a woman." He then objected that she was engaged to J. B. As I knew she was pre-engaged to me, as I regarded

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

not her birth but her qualifications, and as I believed those consequences might be prevented, I could see no valid objection yet. However, I did not insist on my own judgment, but desired the whole might be referred to Mr. Perronet, which he readily consented to.

31. As soon as I was alone, I began to consider with myself whether I was *in my senses* or no, whether love had *put out my eyes* (as my brother affirmed), or I had the use of them still. I weighed the steps I had taken yet again and the grounds on which I had proceeded. A short account of these I wrote down simply in the following terms:

1. From the time I was six or seven years old, if any one spoke to me concerning marrying, I used to say, I thought I never should "because I should never find such a woman as my father had."

2. When I was about seventeen (and so till I was six or seven and twenty), I had no thought of marrying "because I could not keep a wife."

3. I was then persuaded, "it was unlawfull for a priest to marry," grounding that persuasion on the (supposed) sense of the primitive church.

4. Not long after, by reading some of the mystick writers, I was brought to think "marriage was the less perfect state," and that there was some degree (at least) of "taint upon the mind necessarily attending the marriage bed."

5. At the same time, I viewed in a strong light

APPENDICES

St. Paul's words to the Corinthians, and judged it "impossible for a married man to be so without carefulness or to attend upon the Lord with so little distraction as a single man might do."

6. Likewise, being desirous to lay out all I could in feeding the hungry and cloathing the naked, I could not think of marrying "because it would bring such expence as would swallow up all I now gave away."

7. But my grand objection for these twelve years past has been, "a dispensation of the gospel is committed to me. And I will do nothing which directly or indirectly tends to hinder my preaching the gospel."

8. My first objection was easily removed by my finding some, though very few women, whom I could not but allow to be equal to my mother, both in knowledge and piety.

9. My second, "that I could not keep a wife," held only till I found reason to believe there were persons in the world who, if I were so inclined, were both able and willing to keep *me*.

10. My third vanished away when I read with my own eyes Bp. Beverege's "Codex Conciliorum." I then found the very Council of Nice had determined just the contrary to what I had supposed.

11. St. Paul slowly and gradually awakened me out of my mystic dream, and convinced me "the bed is undefiled and no necessary hindrance to the highest perfection." Though still I did not quite

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

shake off the weight till our last Conference in London.

12. I was next, though very unwillingly, convinced that there might be such a case as Dr. Koker's, who often declared he was never so free from care, never served God with so little distraction, as since his marriage with one who was both able and willing to bear that care for him.

13. The two other objections weighed with me still, increase of expence and hindering the gospel. But with regard to the former, I now clearly perceived that my marriage would bring little expence, if I married one I maintain now, who would afterward desire nothing more than she had before and would chearfully consent that our children (if any) should be wholly brought up at Kingswood.

14. As to the latter, I have the strongest assurance which the nature of the thing will allow, that the person proposed would not hinder, but exceedingly further me in the work of the gospel. For from a close observation of several years (three of which she spent under my own roof), I am persuaded she is in every capacity an help meet for me.

15. First, as an housekeeper she has every qualification I desire. She understands all I want to have done. She is remarkably neat in person, in cloaths, in all things; she is nicely frugal, yet not sordid. She has much common sense; contrives every thing for the best; makes every thing go as far as it can go; foresees what is wanted and provides it in time;

APPENDICES

does all things quick and yet without hurry; she is a good work-woman, able to do the finest, ready to do the coarsest work; observes my rules when I am absent, as well as when I am present, and takes care that those about her observe them, yet seldom disobliges any of them.

16. As a nurse (which my poor, shattered, infeeble carcase now frequently stands in need of), she is careful to the last degree, indefatigably patient and inexpressibly tender. She is quick [patient],¹ cleanly, skillfull and understands my constitution better than most physicians.

17. As a companion, she has good sense, and some knowledge [both] of [books and] men. She is of an engaging behaviour and of a mild, sprightly, chearfull, and yet serious temper.

18. As a friend, she has been long tried and found faithfull. She watches over me both in body and soul, understanding all my weaknesses, sympathizing with me and helpfull to me in all, never ashamed, never afraid, having a continual presence of mind in all difficulties and dangers, in all enabled to cover my head and strengthen my hands in God.

19. Lastly, as a fellow-labourer in the gospel of Christ (the light wherein my wife is chiefly to be considered), she had in a measure which I never found in any other both grace and gifts and fruit.

¹ In this and the following paragraphs, words enclosed in brackets have a line drawn through them in the manuscript. The corrections reflect Wesley's later judgment on his song in praise of Grace Murray.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

With regard to the first, she is crucified to the world desiring nothing but God, dead to the [desire of the flesh, the desire of the eye, the pride of life; exemplarily chast, modest, temperate, yet without any affectation. She] is [teachable] and reprovable, gentle and [longsuffering], eminently compassionate; weeping with those that weep; bearing both my burthens, those of the preachers, and those of the people; zealous of good works; longing to spend and be spent for the glory of God and the good of men.

20. As to her gifts, she has a clear apprehension and a deep knowledge of the things of God, a quick discernment of spirits and no small insight into the devices of Satan. She has been trained up, more especially for these ten years, in the word of truth, having constantly attended [both] the [morning] and evening preaching without despising the meanest of our preachers. She is well acquainted with, and exercised in, our method of leading souls, having gone through all our little offices, and discharged them all entirely well. She has a ready utterance, a spirit of convincing as well as persuasive speech, a winning address, an agreeable carriage, in whatever company she is engaged. By means of all which she is exceedingly [beloved] almost wherever she comes, and is dear in an uncommon degree to great numbers of the people.

21. And as to the fruit of her labours [I never yet heard or read of any woman so owned of God], so many have been convinced of sin by her private

APPENDICES

conversation, and so many have received remission of sins in her bands or classes or under her prayers. I particularly insist upon this. If ever I have a wife, she ought to be the most usefull woman in the kingdom, not barely one who probably *may* be so (I could not be content to run such a hazard) but one that undeniably *is* so. Now, shew me the woman in England, Wales or Ireland, who has already done so much [good as G. M. I will say more. Shew me one in all the English annals whom God has employed in so high a degree—I might say, in all the history of the church, from the death of our Lord to this day. This is no hyperbole, but plain, demonstrable fact. And, if it be, who is so proper to be my wife?]

22. I cannot doubt but such a person, being constantly with me (for she is both willing and able to accompany me in all my journeys, another circumstance which is absolutely necessary in such an helper as I want), would be so far from being an hindrance to my work that she would remove many hindrances out of the way. She would, in great measure, either prevent or remove those bodily weaknesses and disorders which now increase fast upon me. By caring for me, she would free me from a thousand cares and enable me to serve God with less distraction. She is and would be a continual defence (under God) against unholy desires and inordinate affections, which I never did entirely conquer for six months together before my intercourse

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

with her. Now that 'tis κρείττον μαλλον γαμένη πυρεθαι¹ is owned, and marriage being supposed, point out a properer person.

23. But she would not only remove hindrances. Such a friend and fellow-labourer (I do not say probably would, but actually does) greatly assists and furthers me in my work, inlivening my dull and dead affections, composing and calming my hurried thoughts, sweetning my spirits when I am rough and harsh, and convincing me of what is true, or persuading me to what is right, when perhaps no other could, at the same time loosening my soul from all below, and raising it up to God.

24. She would likewise remove many hindrances from others, from women in particular. She would guard many from inordinate affection for me, to which they would be far less exposed, both because they would have far less hope of success, and because I should converse far more sparingly with them, perhaps not in private with any young women at all, at least not with any member of our own societies.

25. And she might directly further the work by employing all her grace and gifts on that very thing:

¹ Cor. 7-9: "For it is better to marry than to burn." Leger notes that the defective spelling of the Greek betrays the illiterate hand of the amanuensis. In regard to this whole paragraph, one may share, with the editor of Wesley's Journal, a "misgiving lest readers more familiar with modern phraseology than with the words and meanings of the older . . . writers, should read into them a significance not warranted by the known facts of the writer's inward and outward life." (See Journal, vol. i, p. 52.)

APPENDICES

in regulating female classes and bands; in examining, instructing, reproofing, comforting; in awakening souls (under God), bringing them to the faith and building them up therein. Therefore all my seven arguments against marriage are totally set aside. Nay, some of them seem to prove both that I ought to marry, and that G. M. is the person.

26. But it is objected to this, (1) that my marrying her would turn the greater part of our preachers out of the way, insomuch that they would despise my authority and act no more in conjunction with me.

Secondly, that it would break up our societies and cause them to cry out, "Every man to his tents, O Israel."

Thirdly, that it would give such scandal to the world as never could be removed.

27. I can not receive any one of these propositions without proof. Let us hear then the reasons that support them.

The first is, "because she is low born." Her parents were poor, labouring people.

I answer, this weighs nothing with me as it does not prevent either her grace or gifts. Besides, whoever I marry I believe it will not be a gentlewoman; I despair of finding any such so qualified.

28. The second reason is, "because she was my servant." I answer, I therefore like her the better. By that means *intus & in cute novi*. By living so long with her under one roof, I am as secure against

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

being deceived in her as I can well be against being deceived in any one. Indeed, I should scruple marrying any woman who had not done so for some time.

29. A third reason is, "she has travelled with me six months." With regard to this, I grant some would probably say, "She was my mistress before she was my wife." And let them say this, it would hurt just as much as a thousand things they have said before. But let them know withall, I should never marry any woman till I had proof that she both could and would travel with me. It is my belief that, when these things were fairly represented, not only nineteen in twenty of our preachers and societies would be satisfied, but also the reasonable part of the world. And for the rest, the good would outweigh that evil.

30. But the fourth and grand reason is behind, "She is already engaged to another."

I ask, where? You say, "at Epworth." J. B. then asked, "Will you marry me?" and she replied, "I will."

I grant it. But, without insisting on numerous circumstances which account for her weakness in so doing, I insist only on one: she was contracted before. Therefore this promise was null and void. And that contract was far stronger than this. At Epworth she only said, "I *will* take you." At Dublin she said, "I *do*."

"But, before she went to Dublin, she consented in Derbyshire to J. B.'s proposal."

APPENDICES

I grant this also. But before that she had consented to my proposal at Newcastle.

Therefore, what was done at Newcastle vacated a thing of the same kind done afterward in Derbyshire. And the contract *de praesenti* made at Dublin vacated the contract *de futuro* made at Epworth.

31. "But J. B. (this is the fifth reason) will not believe this. Therefore, he will expose you as having married his wife."

Perhaps he will believe it by and by. And I am willing to stay any reasonable time till he does. At least, there is reason to think most others will believe it, when a fair state of the case is laid before them.

32. "But there is one reason more, 'You have said and have printed, that you would never marry.'"

This is a mistake. I have never said any more, either in publick or private, than "I do not design to marry." And I said true. I did not design it, nor thought that I ever should, when I said so. But the reasons which I then had against it are now wholly removed.

I never said so much as this in print. Indeed, I published "Thoughts on Marriage." But in our last Conference, I was convinced they were not just, and, accordingly, I then altered them. And as to those words in the "Appeal," "My wife and children are yet unborn," they imply no more by natural construction, nor did I then intend any more thereby, than that I had neither wife nor children at that time, viz., in the year 1744.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

The short is this: (1) I have Scriptural reason to marry; (2) I know no person so proper as this.

32.¹ The next morning my brother spoke more warmly till I left him and W. Shent together. I came back about one, and found they had both taken horse some hours before. I had appointed to preach the next night at Hineley Hill. About two I set out. My horse being worn out was all in a sweat before he had gone a mile. And I was extremely weak myself, having had a flux for several days. But God was pleased to strengthen both man and beast, so that both grew better every hour.

33. I had a solemn and delightfull ride to Keswick, having my mind stayed on God. I took horse at $\frac{1}{2}$ hour past 3 in the morning. There was neither moon nor stars, but a thick mist, so that I could see no road nor anything else. But I went as right as if it had been noon-day. When I came near Penruddock Moor, the mist vanished, the stars appeared, and the dawn of the morning. So I imagined all the danger was past. But when I was on the midst of the moor, the mist fell again on every side, and I quickly lost my way. I began praying. Immediately it cleared up, and I recovered the high road. On Alston Moor, I mist my way again, and (what I believe no stranger ever did before) rode strait through all the bogs without any stop till I came to the Vale and thence to Hinely Hill.

¹ Wesley here resumes his account.

APPENDICES

34. (H)ann(ah)¹ Broadwood, at whose house I left S[ister] M[urray],² met me at a little distance from it, and said, "Mr. Charles left us two hours since and carried S. M. behind him." I said, *The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away! Blessed be the name of the Lord!* Soon after, James Broadwood came in. He looked at me and burst into tears. I said, "I must go on to Newcastle." James said, "No, I will go and, with God's leave, bring her back." In a quarter of an hour, he took horse, and I calmly committed the cause to God!

35. A large congregation met in the evening. I expounded part of the 20th chapter of the Revelation. But O, what a time was this! It was as though we were already standing before the great, white throne. God was no less present with us in prayer. When one just by me cried with a loud and bitter cry, I prayed, "God would give us a token that all these things should work together for good." He did. He wrote pardon upon her heart. And we all rejoiced unto him with reverence.

36. Thursday the 28 was a day which I set apart for seeking God by fasting and prayer. John Brown and B. Hopper were with me. It was a day never to be forgotten. I was calm, though sad, looking for help from Him only to whom all things are possible. We had all free access to the throne of grace.

¹ The correction—Hannah for Ann—is in Wesley's handwriting.

² The brackets again indicate explanatory additions by the present editor.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

and a sure trust that "God would do all things well."

I now closely examined myself touching what was so confidently laid to my charge, viz., inordinate affection. And this I clearly perceived, that I had never before had so strong an affection for any person under Heaven, which I could easily account for by the concurrence of so many little streams in one. Gratitude for blessings of various kinds which God had given me by her, esteem upon many accounts, regard for my own health both of soul and body, and desire of inlarging the work of God, all conspired with a conviction of her intire love to me to confirm and increase my affection. But yet I could not perceive it was inordinate by any of the marks which use to attend such an affection. For (1) inordinate affection leads from God. But this continually led me to him. (2) Inordinate affection makes us less desirous of doing the works of God, less zealous to pray, preach, or do good in any kind. But this increased my desire of doing good in every kind and my zeal to do all the works of God. (3) Inordinate affection makes us cold and dead in preaching, praying, or any other office of religion. But this made me more alive in all, more sensible of the power and presence of God. (4) Inordinate affection creates jealousy toward rivals and resentment toward them that oppose it. But I never felt a minute's jealousy, even of J. B., nor a minute's resentment toward those who tore her from me. (5) Inordinate affection necessarily cre-

APPENDICES

ates uneasiness in the absence of the object of it, whereas I never was uneasy neither *in* parting nor *after* it, no more than if she had been a common person. For all these reasons (and I might mention several more) I could not conceive that mine was an inordinate affection, unless it was *such* an inordinate affection as never was before from the beginning of the world.

37. I need add no more than that, if I had had more regard for her I loved than for the work of God, I should now have gone strait on to Newcastle and not back to Whitehaven. I knew this was giving up all; but I knew God called, and therefore, on Friday 29 set out. The storm was full in my face and exceeding high, so that I had much difficulty to set my horse, particularly as I was riding over the broad, bare backs of those enormous mountains. However, I kept on as I could till I came to the brow of Hatside. So thick a fog then fell that I was soon out of all road and knew not which way to turn. I lifted up my heart. The fog vanished in a moment, and I saw Gamblesby to which I was going. I set out early on Saturday 30, and in the afternoon reached Whitehaven. Today, I resumed my spare diet, which I shall probably quit no more.

38. Sunday, October 1, I was in great heaviness, my heart sinking in me like a stone. Only so long as I was preaching, I felt ease. When I had done, the weight returned. I went to church sorrowfull and very heavy, though I knew not any particular cause.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

And God found me there. Not only the lessons, both morning and afternoon, containing the account of the three children in the fiery furnace, of Daniel in the lion's den, and of our Lord's walking on the water and calming the storm, seemed all designed for me, but even the Psalms which were sung all the day. I found likewise much refreshment in the Sacrament. When I came home, I took up a Common Prayer-book and opened upon those words, "Deliver me not over unto the will of mine adversaries, for there are false witnesses risen up against me, and such as speak wrong. I should utterly have fainted but that I believe verily to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. O, tarry thou the Lord's leisure; be strong, and he shall comfort thy heart, and put thou thy trust in the Lord." Psa. 27. 14, etc.

39. In the evening my heaviness returned, but with much of the spirit of prayer. It seemed to me that I ought not to linger here, and yet I knew not whither to go till Mr. P. asked, "Will you go to Leeds on Tuesday?" Immediately my mind was easy. I had sent notice of being there on Wednesday evening, but it was gone out of my thoughts. I determined to go—only I was concerned to leave Whitehaven without a preacher.

40. We then poured out our hearts before God. And I was led, I know not how, to ask that, if he saw good, he would shew what would be the end of these things, in dreams or visions of the night.

APPENDICES

I dreamed I saw a man bring out G. M., who told her she was condemned to die, and that all things were now in readiness for the execution of that sentence. She spoke not one word, nor shewed any reluctance, but walked up with him to the place. The sentence was executed without her stirring either hand or foot. I looked at her till I saw her face turn black. Then I could not bear it, but went away. But I returned quickly and desired she might be cut down. She was then laid upon a bed. I sat by, mourning over her. She came to herself and began to speak, and I awaked.

41. Monday 2 I dedicated to God in fasting and solemn prayer. We had free access to the throne of grace, and I found my will more resigned. In the evening, Joseph Cownly came and brought me a letter from Mr. Whitefield, pressing me much to meet my brother and him at Leeds on Wednesday evening. My brother had likewise charged J. C. "If I would not come, to come thither himself."

42. Tuesday 3. We rode to Old Hutton and about 9 the next night reached Leeds. Here I found, not my brother, but Mr. Whitefield. I laid down by him on the bed. He told me, "My brother would not come till J. B. and G. M. were married." I was troubled. He perceived it. He wept and prayed over me, but I could not shed a tear. He said all that was in his power to comfort me, but it was in vain. He told me, "It was his judgment that she was *my* wife, and that he had said so to J. B.; that he

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

would fain have persuaded them to wait and not to marry till they had seen me; but that my brother's impetuosity prevailed and bore down all before it." ✓

43. I felt no murmuring thought, but deep distress. I accepted the just punishment of my manifold unfaithfulness and unfruitfulness, and therefore could not complain. But I felt the loss both to me and the people, which I did not expect could ever be repaired. I tried to sleep; but I tried in vain, for sleep was fled from my eyes. I was in a burning fever, and more and more thoughts still crowding into my mind, I perceived if this continued long, it would affect my senses. But God took that matter into his hands, giving me, on a sudden, sound and quiet sleep. ✓

44. Thursday 5, about 8, one came in from Newcastle and told us, "They were married on Tuesday." My brother came an hour after. I felt no anger. Yet I did not desire to see him. But Mr. Wh[itefield] constrained me, after a few words had past, he accosted me with, "____." ¹ I renounce all intercourse with you but what I would have with an heathen man or a publican." I felt little emotion. It was only adding a drop of water to a drowning man. Yet I calmly accepted his renunciation and acquiesced therein. Poor Mr. Wh. and J. Nelson burst into tears. They prayed, cried and intreated till the ✓

¹ "... Cryptic signs borrowed from Byrom's system of shorthand, which Wesley adopted in Georgia. Apparently mean, "You are a felon," or "a villain." (Leger, p. 88n.)

APPENDICES

storm past away. We could not speak, but only fell on each other's neck.

45. J. B. then came in. Neither of us could speak: but we kist each other and wept. Soon after, I talked with my brother alone. He seemed utterly amazed. He clearly saw I was not what he had thought, and now blamed her only, which confirmed me in believing my presage was true and I should see her face no more.

46. But the great mystery to me was this: by what means under heaven could she (who I knew, whatever others thought, had for ten years loved me as her own soul) be prevailed upon to marry another? Especially after so solemn a contract with me. I could not unravel it till I read my brother's papers. What I learned from them (and some others) was this:

47. Her mind was quite settled when I left her at Hineley Hill, nor had she any more thought of J. B. than of John Jones. On Saturday, Sunday, and Monday was the same. On Monday, she wrote to S[ister] Proctor in these words: "If Mr. B[ennet] comes to Newcastle, write to me immediatly, for I must not see him. It will tear my soul to pieces, seeing I can by no means help him now. For whom God hath joined together, no man can put asunder. And well I am assured that it was his will it should be so—glory be to God, I find him mightily present with me. My soul is athirst for God and the good of souls. I find my former zeal returned. I trust

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

I shall be more bold in the cause of Christ than ever.—The Lord hath brought strange things to pass, what I never looked for. Praise the Lord, O my soul, who hath cast thy lot in a fair ground!" ✓

On Tuesday 26, she was much in prayer, and appeared exceeding thankfull to God and more and more fixt every hour to live and die with me.

48. On Wednesday 27, she was exceedingly troubled at my letter from Whitehaven. (H) ann (ah)¹ Broadwood could in no wise comfort her, but it threw her into vehement prayer. About eleven, my brother came. He kist her and said, "G. M. you have broke my heart." Then he dropt down. It is easy to conceive what impression this must make on so tender a mind as hers. Soon after, he put into her hands the following letter, wrote [the day before]:² ✓

My dear Sister and Friend,

What shall I say to you? I would not willingly grieve *you*, though you have well nigh broke my heart, and still you will be the occasion of bringing down my hairs with sorrow to the grave. Neither my soul nor my body will ever recover the wound, in this life, I mean. But *there* the weary are at rest; there all tears are wiped away from our eyes.

Fain would I hope that you can say something in your defence (when I come to talk with you) which

¹ The correction is in Wesley's handwriting.

² Another correction by Wesley.

APPENDICES

now I know not. But the case thus appears to me:

You promised J. B. to marry him—since which, you engaged yourself to another.

How is this possible? And who is that other? One of such importance that his doing so dishonest an action would destroy both himself and me and the whole work of God. It was on the very brink of ruin but the snare is broken, and we are delivered. I am returning with my brother strait to London, but could not leave the country without writing to you. Still I *will* suspend my judgment in that love which hopeth all things. But O, how humbled and thankful ought you to be at your almost miraculous deliverance! Had not the Lord restrained you, what a scandal had you brought upon the gospel; nay, and you would have left your name as a curse upon God's people. But I spare you, and hope in ignorance you did it. Be not therefore troubled overmuch. I never intend to speak an harsh word to you about it, but pray for you and love you till we meet at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

49. She must have been more than human, if this letter, delivered with such circumstances, had not wrought the desired effect. Especially, as she supposed it was wrote when I was by and therefore contained *my* judgment as well as his. So all hope of *me* was utterly cut off. I was "returning strait to London with my brother." I was supposed to have seen us both on "the very brink of ruin, to rejoice

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

that the snare was broken, and to join in exhorting her to be thankfull for our almost miraculous deliverance!"

What wonder, then, that when he asked, "Are you willing to go with me to Leeds, to meet my brother and J. B. there?" she should readily consent. Particularly, as she believed that it was all by my own appointment.

50. About one, he took her behind him and set out. At first, he designed to go by way of Newcastle. But being afraid every moment that I was just at his heels, he used several stratagems to elude his pursuer, and at last, turned out of the Newcastle road and made strait for Durham. But in a little time, they lost the way, and so were glad to lodge at John Brown's in Newlands.

She appeared very cheerful when they came in, but it was not so when she was retired. For she did not sleep all night, but lay trembling and tossing to and fro, as one in deep distress.

51. Upon the supposition that she loved J. B. best, this was utterly unintelligible. For what could she desire more? She was going, with my full consent, to marry him immediatly. But upon the contrary supposition, the mixture of chearfulness and sadness is easy to be understood. Looking on the things that were past in the same light with my brother, and now believing she really belonged to J. B., and that by giving herself up to him she should at once clear her conscience, preserve one she tenderly loved from

APPENDICES

ruin, and prevent so many dreadfull consequences, she rejoiced and sung praise, as having escaped out of a snare and found a great deliverance. But still she could not prevent many doubts, whether she belonged to him or no, nor, probably, some fears that all things had not been fairly represented to her. Above all, her love to me, together with the remembrance of many things which had past between us, would sometimes return, quash all her joys, and be as a sword piercing her heart.

52. In the morning, they rode on to Ferry-hill and were informed, "J. B. was at Newcastle." She chearfully said, "Let us go; let us go to him." But my brother being informed, "He would have nothing to do with her," dropt her at Mr. Bell's, two miles short of the town, and went forward himself to reconcile him to her.

53. The way by which he endeavoured this was by laying all the blame upon *me*, as having used my whole art and authority to seduce another man's wife. This was the scope of all his discourse at Newcastle. The effect of what he and J. B. said (for they spoke just alike) was that all in the house (unless one or two that were instant in prayer) were set on fire, filled with anger and confusion, and driven to their wits' end: S[ister] Proctor would leave the house immediately; John Whitford would preach with Mr. W. no more; Matt. Errington dreamed the house itself was all in flames (and most certainly so it was). Another dreamer went a step farther and

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

saw Mr. W. in hell-fire. Jane Keith was peremptory: "John W. is a child of the devil," coming pretty near J. B. himself, whose repeated words was, "If John W. is not damned, there is no God."

54. When J. B. was so clearly convinced "the fault lay all in *me*," G. M. and he were brought together. She fell at his feet, acknowledged she had used him ill, and begged he would forgive her. To satisfy her entirely as to any scruple which might remain with regard to me, one was brought in to assure her, "I had given her up and would have nothing more to say to her, only I had ordered him to procure some place among the country societies where she might live privately." Upon this, one cried out, "Good God! What will the world say? He is tired of her, and so thrusts his wh— into a corner. Sister M., will you consent to this?" She answered, "No. I will die first." So, seeing no other way, she frankly declared, "I *will* have J. B., if he will have *me*."

55. On Tuesday morning, October 3, they were married. They all then rode on contentedly to Leeds to give me the meeting there, as well that I might have the pleasure of seeing the bride as "that I might acknowledge my sin" (those were my brother's expressions) before J. B. and them all.

56. But this I was not altogether ready to do. Neither did I apprehend she desired my company any more, till on Friday, October 6, I was informed,

APPENDICES

"Both J. B. and his wife desired to see me." I went, but O, what an interview! It was not soon that words could find their way. We sat weeping at each other, till I asked her, "What did you say to my brother, to make him accost me thus?" She fell at my feet, said "she never had spoke, nor could speak, against me," uttering many other words to the same effect, in the midst of numberless sighs and tears. Before she rose, he fell on his knees, too, and asked my pardon for what he had spoken of me. Between them both, I knew not what to say or do. I can forgive; but who can redress the wrong?

57. After dinner, I talked with her alone. She averred with the utmost emotion, being all dissolved in tears, "that she never laid the blame on me, whom she knew to be wholly innocent; that she would rather die than speak against one to whom she had so deep obligations; that, at the time I first spoke to her at Newcastle, she loved me above all persons living; that, after her engagement with J. B., her heart was divided till she went to Ireland; that then it was whole with me, and, from that time till J. B. met us at Epworth; that, after his speaking, she was divided again, till I talked with her on the road, from which hour she loved me more and more till we parted at Hineley Hill; that, when my brother took her thence, she thought he was carrying her to me; that, when she knew more of his design, she told him, 'I will do nothing till I have

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

seen Mr. W."; but that, when it was told her at Newcastle, among a thousand other things, "Mr. W. will have nothing to say to you," then she said, "Well, I will have Mr. B., if he will have me." If these things are so, hardly has such a case been from the beginning of the world!

A short account of the whole I drew up a few days after, in the following lines.

In riding between Leeds and Newcastle.

1. O Lord, I bow my sinful head!

Righteous are all thy ways with man!

Yet suffer me with thee to plead,

With lowly reverence to complain,

With deep, unutter'd grief to groan,

O what is this that Thou hast done!

2. Oft, as through giddy youth I roved

And danced along the flowry way,

By chance or thoughtless passion moved,

An easy, unsuspecting prey

I fell, while love's envenomed dart

Thrilled through my veins and tore my heart.

3. At length, by sad experience taught,

Firm I shook off the abject yoke,

Abhorred his sweetly poisonous draught,

Through all his wily fetters broke,

Fixt my desires on things above

And languished for celestial love.

APPENDICES

4. Born on the wings of sacred hope
Long had I soared and spurned the ground,
When panting for the mountain-top
My soul a kindred spirit found,
By heaven entrusted to my care,
The daughter of my faith and prayer.
5. In early dawn of life serene,
Mild, sweet and tender was her mood;
Her pleasing form spoke all within
Soft and compassionately good,
Listening to every wretche's care,
Mixing with each her friendly tear.
6. In dawn of life, to feed the poor,
Glad she her little all bestowed,
Wise to lay up a better store
And hasting to be rich in God,
God whom she sought with early care,
With reverence and with lowly fear.
7. E'er twice four years past o'er her head,
Her infant breast with love He filled,
His glorious, gracious name revealed
Till, sweetly forced her heart to yield,
She groaned to ascend Heaven's high abode,
To die into the arms of God.
8. Yet warm with youth and beauty's pride,
Soon was her heedless soul betrayed;

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

From Heaven her footsteps turned aside
O'er pleasure's flowry plain she strayed.
Fondly the toys of earth she sought,
And God was not in all her thought.

9. Not long. A messenger she saw
Sent forth glad tidings to proclaim;
She heard with joy and wondring awe
His cry, "Sinners, behold the Lamb!"
His eyes her inmost nature shook;
His word her heart in pieces broke.
10. Her bosom heaved with labouring sighs
And groaned the unutterable prayer;
And rivers from her streaming eyes
Fast flowed the never-ceasing tear,
Till Jesus spake, "Thy mourning's o'er!
Believe! Rejoice! and weep no more!"
11. She heard; pure love her soul o'erflowed,
Sorrow and sighing fled away;
With sacred zeal her spirit glowed,
Panting his every word to obey.
Her faith by plenteous fruits she shewed,
And all her works were wrought in God.
12. Nor works alone her faith approved;
Soon in affliction's furnace tried
By him who next to Heaven she loved,
As silver seven times purified.

APPENDICES

Shone midst the flames her constant mind;
Emerged, and left its dross behind.

13. When death in freshest strength of years
 Her much-loved friend tore from her breast,
 A while she poured her plaints and tears,
 But quickly turning to her rest,
 “Thy will be done!” she meekly cried,
 “Suffice, for me the Saviour died.”
14. Then first I viewed with fixt regard
 Her artless tears in silence flow.
 “For thee are better things prepared,”
 I said, “Go forth, with Jesus go.
 My Master’s peace be on thy soul,
 Till perfect love shall make thee whole.”
15. But O, what trials are in store
 For those whom God delights to bless;
 Abandoned soon to Satan’s power,
 Sifted as wheat, from the abyss,
 The lowest deep, she groaned aloud,
 “Where is my joy, my hope, my God?”
16. In chains of horrid darkness bound,
 Torn by the dogs of hell she lay;
 By fear and sin encompast round,
 Anguish and pain and huge dismay,
 Till the loud, bitter cry out-broke,
 “My God, why hast thou me forsook?”

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

17. Yet, bowing down her fainting head
 And sinking to the gulph beneath,
She flew to every sinner's aid,
 To snatch him from the second death;
"Tho' justly I am lost," she cried,
 "Live thou! For thee the Saviour died."

18. But when again his glory shone,
 When God anew unveiled his face,
What heavenly zeal, what love unknown,
 What strong, unuttered tenderness
For every soul her heart o'erflowed!
 What longing to be spent for God!

19. I saw her run with wingèd speed
 In works of faith and labouring love;
I saw her glorious toil succeed,
 And showers of blessings from above
Crowning her warm, effectual prayer,
 And glorified my God in her.

20. Yet while to all her tender mind
 In streams of pure affection flowed,
To one, by ties peculiar joined,
 One only less beloved than God,
"Myself," she said, "My soul I owe
 My guardian angel here below."

21. From Heaven the gratefull ardor came,
 Pure from the dross of low desire,

APPENDICES

Well-pleased, I mark'd the guiltless flame,
Nor dared to damp the sacred fire,
Heaven's choicest gift on man bestowed,
Strengthning our hearts and hands in God.

22. 'Twas now I bowed my aching head,
While sickness shook the house of clay;
Dutueous she ran with humble speed
Love's tenderest offices to pay,
To ease my pain, to sooth my care,
To uphold my feeble hands in prayer.

23. Amazed I cried, "Surely for me
An help prepared of Heaven thou art!
Thankfull I take the gift from thee,
O Lord, nor aught on earth shall part
The souls whom thou hast joined above
In lasting bonds of sacred love."

24. Abashed she spoke, "O what is this,
Far above all my boldest hope!
Can God beyond my utmost wish,
Thus lift his worthless handmaid up?
This only could my soul desire,
This only (had I dared) require."

25. From that glad hour, with growing love,
Heaven's latest, dearest gift I viewed;
While pleased each moment to improve,
We urged our way with strength renew'd,

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Our one desire, our common aim, ✓
To extol our gracious Master's name. ✓

26. Companions now in weal and woe ✓
 No power on earth could us divide,
 Nor summer's heat nor wintry snow
 Could tear my pardner from my side,
 Nor toil, nor weariness, nor pain,
 Nor horrors of the angry main.

27. Oft (though as yet the nuptial tie ✓
 Was not) clasping her hand in mine
 “What force,” she said, “beneath the sky
 Can now our well knit souls disjoin?
 With thee I'd go to India's coast,
 To worlds in distant ocean lost.”

28. Such was the friend than life more dear, ↗
 Whom in one luckless, balefull hour
 (Forever mentioned with a tear),
 The tempest's unresisted power
 (O the unutterable smart!)
 Tore from my inly-bleeding heart.

29. Unsearchable thy judgments are, ↗
 O Lord, a bottomless abyss!
 Yet sure thy love, thy guardian care,
 O'er all thy works extended is.
 O why dids't thou the blessing send?
 Or why thus snatch away my friend?

APPENDICES

30. What thou hast done I know not now! /

Suffice I shall hereafter know!

Beneath thy chastning hand I bow;

That still I live to thee I owe.

O teach thy deeply-humbled son

To say, "Father, thy will be done!"

31. Teach me from every pleasing snare

To keep the issues of my heart.

Be thou my love, my joy, my fear!

Thou my eternal portion art.

Be thou my never-failing friend,

And love, O love me to the end!

A LETTER TO MOLLY¹

John Wesley was an incorrigible letter-writer, and his letters, seldom dull, are always revealing. The following letter to his wife, which was preserved in a collection belonging to a prominent Methodist family in England, sets forth, in duly numbered paragraphs, the history of Wesley's domestic tragedy. On the whole, this epistle can hardly be classed with those letters to his wife which good Thomas Jackson, in 1841, declared to "display the utmost tenderness of affection, such as few female hearts could have withstood." But the facts are here set forth in good Methodist fashion—that is, candidly and in order.

York. July 15, 17....

1. I think it needful to write one letter more in order to state the case between you and me from the beginning. I can't indeed do this so exactly as I would because I have not either those letters, or those Parts of my Journal which give a particular

¹ The author is indebted for this letter to Mr. Alec F. Hall of Bristol, England, to whose grandfather, once President of the Wesleyan Conference, this letter and many other valuable Wesleyan papers once belonged. This was possibly a draft of a letter which Wesley may or may not have sent to his wife. At any rate, the conclusion appears to have been used in more than one letter to her. The brackets indicate uncertain words; the dots, those that are indecipherable. The letter has not been changed except for the more archaic abbreviations.

APPENDICES

account of all circumstances just as they occurred. I have therefore only my memory to depend on; and this is not very retentive of evil. So that it is probable I shall omit abundance of things, which might have thrown still more light on this subject. However I will do as well as I can, simply relating the fact to the best of my Memory and Judgment.

2. Before we married, I saw you was a well bred woman of great Address and a middling Understanding. At the same time I believed you to be of a mild . . . even Temper. By conversing with you in early days after we were married, I was confirmed in this Belief. Full of this I wrote to you soon after our first Parting, in this openness and simplicity of my heart. And in this Belief I continued after my Return, till we went down to Kingswood.

3. Here as I came one morning into your Room I [found] a sight which I little expected. You was all Thunder and Lightning: I stared and listened: said little and retired. You quickly followed me into the other Room, fell upon your knees and asked my pardon. I desired you to think of it no more, saying, It is with *me* as if it had never been. In 2 or 3 weeks you relapsed again and again . . . often own'd that fault: Only with less and less concern . . . You first found, "we were *both* in fault," and th[en that] all the "fault was on *my side*."

4. We returned to London, and your natural Temper appear'd more and more. In order to soften it as I could, I tried every method I could devise.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Sometimes I reasoned with you at large, sometimes in few words. At other times I declined argument, and tried what Persuasion would do. And many times, I heard all you said, and answer'd only by Silence. But argument and Persuasion, many words and few, Speaking and Silence, were all one. They made no impression at all. One might as well attempt to convince or persuade the North Wind.

5. Finding there was no prevailing upon you by Speaking, I tried what writing would do. And I wrote with all Plainness: yet in as mild a manner as I could, and with all the Softness and Tenderness I was master of. But what effect did it produce? Just none at all. You construed it all into ill nature, and was not easily prevailed upon to *forgive so high an affront*.

6. I think your quarrel with my Brother was near this time, which continued about seven years: During 2 or 3 of which it was, more or less, a constant Bone of Contention between us. Till I told you plainly, "I dare not sit and hear my Brother spoken against. Therefore whenever you begin to talk of Him, I must rise and leave the room."

7. In the midst of this, you drew new matter of offence from my acquaintance with Mrs. Lefevre, a dove-like woman, full of Faith and humble Love and harmless as a little child. I should have rejoiced to converse with her frequently and largely: but for *your* sake I abstain'd. I did not often talk with her

APPENDICES

at all, and visited [her] but twice or thrice in two years. Notwithstanding which, tho you sometimes said, you thought her a good woman, yet at other times you did not scruple to say you "questioned if I did not lie with her." And afterward you seemed to make no question of it.

8. Sometime after you took offence at my being so much with Mrs. Blackwell, and was "sure she did me no good." But this blew over, and you was often in a good humor for a week together till October 1757. Sarah Ryan the Housekeeper at Bristol then put a period to the quarrel between my Brother and you. Meantime she asked me once and again, "Sir should I sit and hear Mrs. W. talk against you, by the Hour together?" I said, "Hear her, if you can thereby do her any good." A while after she came to me and said, "Indeed, Sir, I can bear it no longer: It would wound my own Soul." Immediately you was violently jealous of her, and required me, not to speak or write to her. At the same time you insisted on the "Liberty of opening and reading all Letters directed to *me*." This you had often done before: But I still insisted on my own liberty of speaking and writing to whom I judged proper: and of seeing my own Letters first, and letting you read only those I saw fit.

9. Sunday, Feb. 25, 1758 you went into my study opened my Bureau, and took many of my Letters and Papers. But on your restoring most of them two

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

days after, I said, "Now, my Dear, let all that is past be forgotten and if either of us find any fresh ground of complaint, let us tell it to Mr. Blackwell, or J[s] Jones, or Tho Walsh, but to no other Person whatever." You agreed; and on Monday, March 6 when I took my [leave] of you to set out for Ireland. I thought we had [as tender] a parting as we had had for several years [past]. To confirm this good Understanding, I wrote to you [a few] days after, all that was in my heart. But from the answer I learned it had a quite contrary effect. You *resented* it deeply: So that for ten or 12 weeks together, tho I wrote Letter after Letter, I received not one Line. Meantime you [told] Mrs. Vigor and twenty more. "Mr Wesley *never* writes to *me*. You must enquire concerning Him of Sa. Ryan. He writes to Her *Every Week*." So far from it, that I did not write to her at all, for above twelve weeks before I left Ireland. Yet I really thought you would not tell a willfull lie, at least not in cool blood: till poor dying T. Walsh asked me at Limerick, "How did you part with Mrs. W. last time"? On my saying "Very affectionately," He replied, "Why, what a women is She? She told me your parting words were, I hope to see your wicked Face no more." I now say you were resolved to blacken me at all events and would stick at no means to accomplish it. Nevertheless I laboured for Peace. And at my Return to Bristol, to avoid grieving *you*, did not converse with Sa. Ryan (tho we were in the same House),

APPENDICES

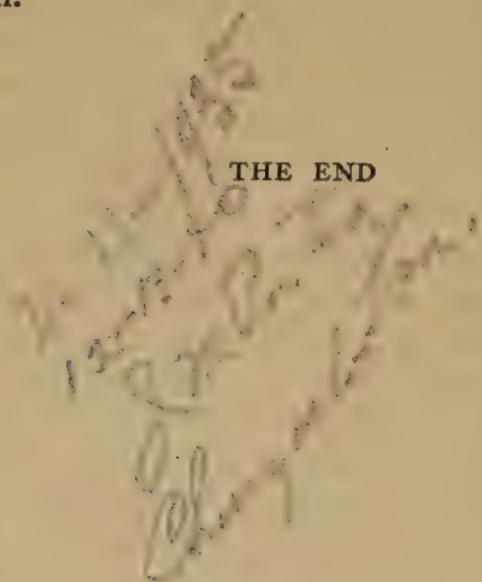
twenty minutes in ten days [time]. I returned to London. Soon after you grew jealous of Sarah Crosby, and led me a weary life, unless I told you every place to which I went, and every person I saw there.

11. ¹ Perceiving you still rose in your Demands, I resolved to break this at once, and to shew you I would be my own master, and go where I pleased without asking anyone's leave. Accordingly on Monday Dec [19] I set out for Norwich: the first Journey I had taken since we were married, without telling you where I went . . . ing at me, tho you cannot hurt me. If [after not]withstanding you continue striking at me still what can I, what can all reasonable men think, but that either you are utterly out of your senses, or your eye is not single. That you married me only for my money: That being disappointed you was almost always out of humour: That this laid you open to a thousand suspicions, which once awakened would sleep no more! My Dear Molly, let the time past suffice. If you have not (to prevent my giving it to bad women) robbed me of my substance too; If you do not blacken me on purpose that when this breaks out, no one may believe [it] Stop, and consider what you do: as yet the breach may be repaired; you have wronged me much: but not beyond Forgiveness. I love you still, and am as clear from all other women as the day I was born. At length know *me* and know *yourself*.

¹ Wesley forgets number 10.

THE LORD'S HORSEMAN

Your enemy I can not be. But let me be your Friend: suspect me no more: asperse me no more: provoke me no more. Do not any longer contend for mastery: for power, money, or Praise. Be content to be a private insignificant Person, known and loved by God and me. Attempt no more to abridge me of the liberty which I claim [by] God and my own conscience: Then shall I govern *you* with gentle sway, and shew that I do indeed love you, as Christ the Church.



THE END

